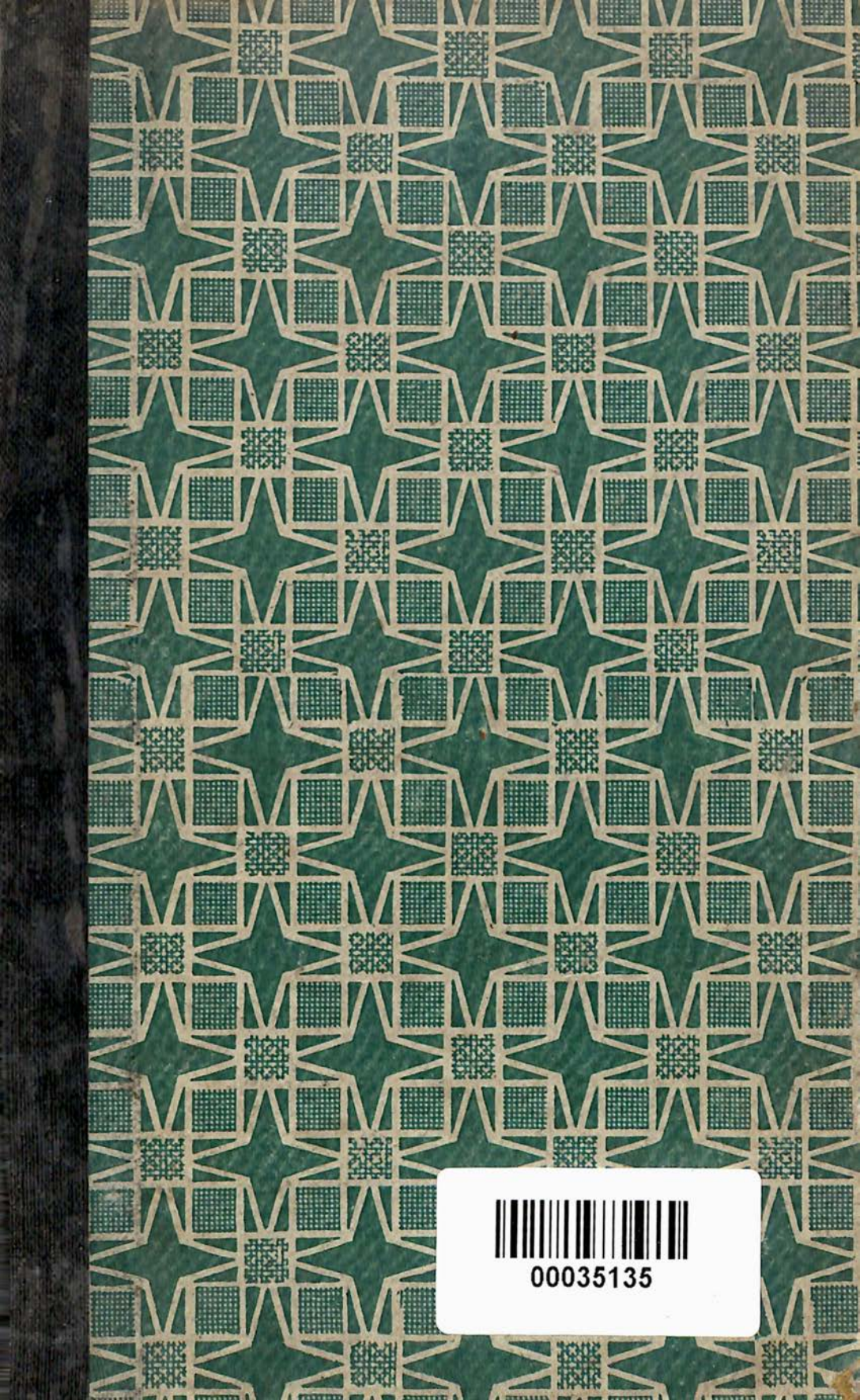
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HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

1789—1795.

Vol. I.

HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY

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PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRD EDITION OF THE ORIGINAL GERMAN WORK,

BY

WALTER C. PERRY Esq.,
AUTHOR OF "THE FRANKS" &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1867.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE Work of Professor von Sybel on the History of the French Revolution enjoys so high a reputation in Germany that the Translator considers it unnecessary to make any apology for presenting it to the English Public. It has long been considered by the ablest historical critics to contain the most impartial account of that great Historical Drama, which is still unrolling before our eyes, and of which we have not yet seen the catastrophe. If the Author needed any justification for re-opening a subject of such universal interest, it would be found in the long list of documents contained in the following preface, all of which were first consulted by him, and most of them by him alone. His preliminary remarks are sufficient to show how justly he estimates the magnitude of the task he has undertaken, and with what patience, diligence, and good fortune, he has collected the great amount of fresh materials indispensable to its due performance; but only a perusal of the work itself will enable the reader to appreciate the far higher qualities of the genuine historian—the power of weighing evidence, and the impartiality of the just and fearless judge.

We have been so long accustomed to see histories of the French Revolution made the theatres of a series of startling melodramatic effects, or the vehicles of extreme political opinions and philosophic theories, that we are almost sur-

prised to find in the following pages a sober statement of facts concerning every portion of the national life of France, during the most fiery trial through which a nation was ever called upon to pass. Foregoing the comparatively easy and popular task of dazzling the reader by a display of all the strange and brilliant meteors which flitted across the wild and bloody waves of revolution, he has endeavoured to open before us the depths from which they rose—to make us acquainted with the great masses of the people, in their errors, sufferings and crimes; and to trace the fearful consequences of arbitrary violence, whether exercised in the name of a crowned despot, a privileged aristocracy, or a sovereign mob.

It cannot but be a source of gratification to the English reader especially, to find in how favourable a light a sagacious and unprejudiced foreign historian views the conduct of the English government and nation, in their long and gigantic struggle against the aggressive tyranny of the French democracy. Full justice is done in the present work to the character of Pitt, who, as it shews, dearly loved peace, though he loved it wisely and not too well—not, like our modern Phocions, "because it is easier for the moment to administer a country under peace than under war, because they either do not, or will not, look forward to the consequences of inaction."

Some objection may possibly be taken to the title of this work, as being too narrow for a history, which, as the Author himself observes, embraces the whole of Europe. But the reader will find, that even when the recital leads him away from French affairs, it is only that he may see them from various sides, and gain a better understanding of the phe-

nomena of the Revolution; and he will come to the conclusion that a true history of Revolutionary France must of necessity be, to a certain extent, a history of all the countries affected by, and mutually affecting, the convulsions by which the French nation was afflicted.

BONN-ON-THE-RHINE, Aug. 1867.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE present work—of which the first edition appeared in the year 1853, and the third, with important alterations and additions, in 1865—undertakes to relate the leading events of European history during the period from 1789—1795, and will shortly be continued to the beginning of the Consulate. Its contents may be arranged under three principal heads: the overthrow of the French Monarchy by the democratic revolution: the annihilation of Poland by the two last partitions: and the dissolution of the German empire by the war of the First Coalition. How closely these events are connected with one another is to some extent already known, and will be more fully set forth in the following recital. They shew, in spite of their external differences, an essential identity of character: in all we see the fall of mediæval feudalism, which in Paris and Warsaw, as well as in the constitution of the German Empire, turned out to the advantage of the modern military state—a fact which gives its peculiar character to this epoch, and enables us to measure the capacity of the liberals of that period. At the time when I made up my mind to publish the results of my labours, there existed, as is well known, an almost incalculable number of works on the French Revolution; while on the other hand very few writers had undertaken to describe the course of German policy during that important epoch. The German Governments at that period (1853) had, without ex-

ception, shrouded in the deepest secrecy their archives relating to the history of the Revolutionary war: and in fact our chief knowledge of it was drawn from a book whose author had heard something a great many things, but the whole truth about nothing. I mean the *Mémoires tirés des Papiers d'un Homme d'État*, a book belonging entirely to the literature of the French *Emigrés*,—who derived their matter exclusively from hearsay,—and which only through some stupid mistake has been attributed to Prince Hardenberg. In Polish affairs we perceive a phenomenon, perhaps unique, that the victors in a great and violent catastrophe have left the task of writing its history almost entirely to the vanquished. Throughout the whole of Europe, not even excepting Germany, the knowledge of the circumstances attending the Partitions, and the judgments formed concerning them, were based exclusively on Polish accounts.

Under such circumstances it was with the greatest pleasure that I hailed the opportunity offered to me—only gradually, it is true, and after long and patient efforts—of consulting the greater part at least of the authentic materials hitherto inaccessible to the public. In the first place I gained access to an extremely rich collection of letters and despatches which passed, subsequently to the year 1790, between several of the most prominent statesmen and generals of Prussia—the Duke of Brunswick, Generals Möllendorf and Manstein, and the ministers Haugwitz, Hardenberg, and Buchholtz. I then consulted the correspondence of the Prince of Coburg, preserved at Gotha; the papers of the Austrian government in Belgium, at present in the archives of Brussels; the reports of the Dutch ambassadors and the Bavarian *chargés d'affaires*, (the former at the Hague

and the latter at Munich)—which are all laid open to the inquirer with a readiness which merits my warmest thanks. Still more important, of course, was the circumstance, that I succeeded, in the year 1855, in gaining access to the *Staats-Archiv* in Berlin, and deriving the most trustworthy information on all leading points from the papers of the actors themselves. I cannot speak too highly of the liberal spirit with which the present Prussian ministry, more especially, has placed the treasures of their archives at the disposal of the scientific world. The usual bureaucratic timidity has, in their case, given place to juster views of the real interests of the State. Every earnest and respectable investigator may without difficulty consult the documents down to the year 1840. The same facilities, as is well known, are not afforded in London, where the inquirer has to go through a far greater number of tedious and time-consuming forms, than at Berlin: but in the end—and this is the main point—one does get the desired documents, the importance of which need not be dwelt upon, and then receives on all hands the kindest and most effectual aid from the officials of the State Paper Office. And, lastly, I obtained farther additional and extremely important materials for the last portion of my subject—the times of the *Directoire exécutif*—from the archives of Naples, the opening of which, together with the general support afforded to scientific endeavours, is one of the many benefits conferred on the civilized world by the establishment of the kingdom of Italy.

I was not able to make use of the archives of the two Eastern monarchies, Russia and Austria. But the Russian government has itself, during the last few years, caused a series of very valuable works on the epoch of the French Revolution to

be published, and thereby furnished the public with information on the most important points. I may mention, for example, Ssolowjöff's "Fall of Poland," Smitt's "History of Suwarow," and "The History of the War of 1799," by Miliutin. The Russian government, I may observe by the way, could render no greater service to the historian, than by publishing the whole of the correspondence of Catharine II. We may declare with the greatest confidence that they would thereby erect a literary monument, the value and interest of which would not be inferior to that of the correspondence of Frederick the Great and Napoleon I. Less has been done in Austria than in Russia towards the elucidation of the Revolutionary war. Yet even in the former country the severity of the old system is beginning to be relaxed. The interesting publications of Herr von Arneth and Adam Wolf are well known; and now that the correspondence of the imperial family has been published, we may hope that Baron Beust will no longer withhold the diplomatic papers of those important years. But even with regard to these *lacunæ*, we may say that the amount of material already accessible is sufficient to throw light upon all but a very few points of European history. Almost all the decisive moments of the great war—the origin of the Austro-Prussian league—the causes of the contest—the enigmas of the campaign in Champagne—the origin of the Polish Partition—the breach between England and France—the rupture of the Coalition—the separate peace with Prussia—all these events, which have been the subjects of a thousand controversies, now lie in undoubted clearness before the eyes of the historical inquirer.

With regard, in the next place, to the internal course of

the French Revolution, I confess that for a considerable time I hesitated to increase the mass of books in which it is described. On a nearer review, however, of my task, I found a number of recent publications whose important contents seemed to call for a thorough revision of the history of the Revolution—*e. g.* the correspondence between Mirabeau and Lamarck, the Memoirs of Mallet du Pan, of Doulcet de Pontécoulant, and Miot de Melito, and the very numerous Departmental histories, little known abroad, on which the French, to their great credit, continually bestow a vast amount of care and diligence. Furthermore, I had it in my power to consult the most important MSS. in the archives at Paris. The *Dépot de la Guerre* contains the correspondence of the generals in command with the ministers at war—the secret despatches of the Conventional commissioners—the minutes of the trials of Custine and Houchard—the documents relating to the national volunteers of 1792 and the *levée en masse* of 1793—for the most part, as far as I know, hitherto unused, and, as may be supposed, of the highest interest, not only for the military, but also for the political, history of the Revolution. In the *Archives de l'Empire* I obtained an insight into the numerous papers of the Committee of Public Safety, which at that time (1854) had never been consulted by any historical inquirer. This collection was, indeed, greatly thinned under the government of the Directory, and many of the papers were handed over to the respective ministries. But still, what remained was sufficient to furnish the most valuable solutions to many debated questions—*e. g.* the foreign policy of the first Committee of Public Safety—and authentic disclosures respecting the trials of Hebert and Danton and the fall of Robespierre.

They also contained documents relating to the negotiations with Prussia, Sweden, &c.&c.&c.; and further, for the years 1796—1799, the protocols of the *Directoire Exécutif*, together with numerous messages to the *Corps Législatif*, which the latter thought fit to keep secret. Lastly, I endeavoured to gain access to the *Archives des Affaires Étrangères*, but experienced at first never-ending difficulties; for the regulations of this department, which date from an earlier period, are hindering to the inquirer, in spite of the personal kindness of the directors themselves. Finally, however, during the last year, I had the good fortune to obtain the desired authorisation through the favour of His Majesty the French Emperor himself, and was then enabled, with grateful satisfaction, to supplement from the French documents the knowledge obtained through German sources.

I feel myself bound in this place publicly to express my sense of the active kindness with which the directors and officials of the above mentioned Archives, as well as those of the Imperial Library, complied with all my wishes. It is impossible to facilitate the labours of the stranger in a more kindly spirit than was shown to me by all these gentlemen without any exception. To what degree I have turned these numerous sources to account for the advancement of historical knowledge, I must leave to the reader to decide. My earnest endeavour has been to place the hitherto less noticed phases of the great Revolution in as clear a light as possible. The dramatic scenes, therefore, of the parliamentary contests will be found to occupy but little space in the following pages; but, on the other hand, far greater attention is paid to the politico-economical and financial affairs of the French Revolutionary period, and to the relations

of France to the rest of Europe, than in the majority of histories of the Revolution. Hence it happens, that I have been obliged to forego a great number of splendid effects; but I venture to hope that in many cases the reader will find that facts have been substituted for glittering phrases. Under any circumstances, even the most favourable, the composition of a history of the French Revolution must be a hazardous undertaking for a foreigner. He has, in the first place, to overcome the difficulty of making himself in some degree acquainted with the enormous literary mass of books, journals and pamphlets, which for the most part are not to be met with out of Paris. He has to dive into the opinions and views of a great, and at that period, passionately excited nation. He has to pourtray the contests the after-effects of which still agitate the Parisian atmosphere, at one time fanning the fire of party-contest, at another wounding the sensitiveness of national pride. Happily, however, these disadvantages are in some degree self-compensating. If the foreigner finds it more difficult than the Frenchman to understand French phenomena, his judgment is less likely to be warped by party feelings. He will perhaps see many points in a less brilliant light than that in which the French national feeling has been accustomed to regard them; but he is on that account, all the less exposed to the danger of adhering, through attachment to some darling error, to incorrect, and even now sometimes dangerous, views. The Revolution of 1799 has gained the *equality* which it aimed at; but has missed, in spite of its enthusiasm, its second great object—*liberty*. At its commencement it proclaimed the *fraternity*, not only of individuals but of nations; but it soon took the direction of universal conquest, to end its career of unexampled

successes and triumphs in the disaster of Waterloo. When an author, then, does his best, without fear or favour, towards opening up the hidden causes of this double failure, may he hope that the French people will see in his efforts, not envy of their past glories, but a sincere effort to aid them in their future policy?

I may be allowed in a preface to express one personal wish. Nothing would afford me greater satisfaction than that my work should find favour in the eyes of two *savants*, whose labours are indeed confined to special and definitely circumscribed portions of the Revolutionary history, but who by the excellent treatment of their respective themes have proved themselves thorough masters of the science of history. I do not, it may be, agree in all respects with their view of the movement of 1789, but I can for that very reason claim credit for the sincerity with which I offer my warmest thanks for the varied and copious instruction I have derived from the writings of M. Léonce de Lavergne and M. Mortimer Ternaux.

Bonn, Aug. 1867.

HEINRICH von SYBEL.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

The present English Version of my work has been prepared in Bonn by Dr. Walter C. Perry, and has been throughout revised by me. It is an exact and faithful translation of the third edition of the original; some portions of it have been altered and improved in accordance with fresh information contained in publications which have appeared since the year 1865.

H. v. SYBEL.

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ERRATA.

Vol. I page 46 line 3 instead of 327 Millions it should be 357.
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HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

FRANCE BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

RISE OF THE FRENCH MONARCHY.—THE STATE UNDER LOUIS XIV.—DECLINE OF THE STATE UNDER LOUIS XV.—LIBERAL AND RADICAL OPPOSITION.—RURAL NOBILITY AND PEASANT POPULATION.—CONDITION OF TOWNS, TRADE AND MANUFACTURES.—DECLINE OF NATIONAL PROSPERITY.—EFFORTS FOR REFORM UNDER LOUIS XVI.—RESISTANCE OF PRIVILEGED CLASSES.—THE BUDGET.—GENERAL DISSOLUTION OF ORDER IN THE STATE.—THE ARMY.

IN the eighteenth century France afforded an example of a state, the surface of which was covered with modern institutions, but which still rested on a feudal foundation, and preserved within it a thousand feudal elements.

In the earlier part of the middle ages, there existed in that country, as in the rest of Europe, a community of feudal lords and knights, of prelates and corporations. Above these exclusively privileged classes, there rose a feeble monarchy and a universally dominant church. The material relations of the people were fettered by the monopoly of labour in the guilds, and by the inalienability of real property. Although the privileges of the nobility were broad-

cast over the whole soil of France, there existed no aristocratic form of government, but only a minute division of political power, and a constant extension of exclusive privileges, at the cost of political unity and the public weal. The provinces of France, like the German territories, formed almost independent states, whose dukes and counts ruled their own lands as they would or could; and according to their tenures, or the circumstances of the times, led out their vassals to assist or to oppose the king. To their vassals they stood in nearly the same relation as the king to themselves. Every nobleman was virtually lord and chief of his peasants, and was only bound by a few fixed services to his feudal superior. The royal power rose very slowly from amidst this crowd of warlike potentates. Even in the middle ages the kings, by making a skilful use of their alliance with the church and the civic communities, succeeded in getting rid of the great barons of the empire,—the rulers of whole provinces,—and in transferring their authority to the crown. Then the wars with England and the disturbances consequent upon them, afforded Charles VII. the opportunity of gaining the consent of his Estates to the establishment of the first standing army in Europe, and, as a necessary consequence, to the imposition of a fixed and permanent taxation, to be raised throughout the realm by the king's officers. This made the crown independent of the military services of its vassals, and once more gave the royal administration access to the dominions of the great feudal chiefs. And thus the most solid foundation of absolute monarchy in France was laid amidst the joyful applause of the burghers and peasants, who hoped at last to find protection in the crown from plundering nobles, wandering bands of mercenaries, and the miseries of the English wars. Thenceforward the monarchy in France was independent and strong enough to act as a counterpoise to the feudal Estates of the realm. From this position it soon rose to one of undoubted predominance; for when Francis I. had wrested

from the Papacy a decisive influence in the filling up of ecclesiastical offices, he brought the most important of the ancient orders—the clergy—into a state of complete subjection to the throne. At the same time he adorned his court with all the pomp of Burgundian ceremonial and the choicest products of Italian civilisation; and lastly, he inspired the whole nation with the liveliest enthusiasm for the terrible contest with the Emperor Charles V. Above all, he sought by these and similar inducements to entice the nobles from the solitary independence of their castles, into the splendid service of his army and his palace. The revenue was improved under him and his successors, by means of a constantly increasing number of indirect taxes. By the help of these the kings were enabled to enlarge their armies; and when once the crisis of the religious wars had been surmounted, there existed no corporation in France mighty enough to oppose the material power of the monarchy. The nobility, indeed, sometimes called to mind their former independence, whenever a schism in the royal family, or in the factions of the court, afforded them greater freedom of action. But it is well known how Richelieu and Mazarin defeated these last efforts of armed discontent; and when, subsequently, Louis XIV. assumed the reins of government, both king and people were under the conviction, that there was no limit to the royal power but the royal will.

It is scarcely possible in fact to entertain loftier ideas of the royal prerogative than those which filled the mind of this powerful monarch. Yet he did not derive his notions from the legally existing constitution; for this knew of no abolition of the ancient privileges of the nobility, the rights of the imperial parliaments, or the sovereignty of the supreme courts of justice. But he looked to the actual state of things, and saw, that for almost half a century, the king had had the power to carry out his every wish. He read in the New Testament, and in the Byzantian laws, of the divine origin and unlimited omnipotence of the monarchy, and came to

the conclusion, that God, who had set kings to rule over the nations, had likewise granted them the absolute disposal of their subjects. He regarded himself as the source of every law, which would of itself cease to be in force, the moment he withdrew his sanction to its continuance. He enacted laws, raised taxes, and changed the old statutesof the land, according to his pleasure. The manifestations of his royal pride at times trangressed the limits of European comprehension. On one occasion, he cousulted the jurists as to whether the property of the whole soil of the country were not vested in him, as in the Mahometan rulers of the East. Another time he threatened to punish acts of private charity, on the ground that the king, and no one else, was the refuge and protector of the poor in France. It always appeared unquestionable to him, that the superintendence over all matters of conscience and religion was one of the highest prerogatives of the crown; and we know how he tortured thousands of unhappy Huguenots, or drove them from his territory.

A despotism, apparently so absolute, was for many years still more reverenced than feared by the great mass of the French people. Louis XIV. was as active as he was ambitious, and his ambition was directed to the real duties, no less than to the splendours, of his office. In the midst of the profusion and festivity of his court, in the pleasures of the chase and the theatre, of female society and of art, he always found time and energy enough to attend to the grand interests of his empire, and to infuse his own leading ideas into the operations of his ministers. He was fortunate enough to be supported in his administration by the indefatigable, restless, and comprehensive industry of a Colbert. It is true that he often treated the great minister like a serf; but for a whole generation he constantly supported him in the long series of creative projects, on which Colbert founded modern France. Civil and financial administration, civil and criminal procedure, manufactures, and trade, received a new impulse and a wholesome organisation. The great

Ordonnances in reference to these matters are not, indeed, faultless performances; but even their defects may pass in the 17th Century for signs of progress; and they everywhere testify to the vast research, practical insight, and patriotism of their author. Still more forcibly are we struck by the high standard arrived at in these documents, when we bury ourselves in the reports of the current administration in the time of Colbert.[1] Grand and imposing is the superiority with which the modern system of government, undeveloped and despotic as it is, rises above the confusion and the narrowness of decaying feudalism. Under Colbert, as under his predecessor Richelieu, the progress of the monarchy constantly took the same general direction, as it had followed ever since the close of the middle ages. When the territories of the old feudal state were merged in one great political community, the development of society, and the progress of civilization, demanded a corresponding modification of the political constitution. This all important task was undertaken in France,—not by the nobility, not by the clergy,—but by the crown. While the nobles were wasting the blood of their vassals in their private feuds with one another, the crown was establishing a standing army for the protection of the country. While the nobles utterly neglected the police arrangements of their territories, the crown collected the forces of the *maréchaussée* for the protection of internal traffic. While the nobles were only thinking of their privileges and exemptions, the crown was providing for the general welfare, by developing the resources of the country. It was the same in every department of public life; and it is this tendency to keep the general good in view which characterises all the measures of Colbert. Whether it was a question of the great Southern Canal, or of the debts of some petty commune, or of the protection of the highways from vagrants or the defence of the innocent ac-

[1] Correspondance administrat. de Louis XIV. ed. Depping.

cused against an arbitrary tribunal, the feeling of the minister is always on the side of the public weal, the real interests of the country, and the protection of the lower classes; while the conduct of the interested parties displays the unblushing selfishness of family, rank, or corporation. Severe as were the proceedings of the government against many private interests and rights, we cannot doubt that, in the majority of cases, its operations were highly conducive to the healthy organisation of the state.

If, moreover, we take into account that France at the same time acquired an almost dominant position in Europe, and that the fullest gratification was afforded to the warlike spirit of the people, we shall cease to be astonished at the long popularity enjoyed by Louis XIV. We should, however, be mistaken in regarding his government as, in the full sense of the the term, absolute. Strong as it was, it was surrounded on all sides by independent powers, by rights and immunities, privileges, and separate jurisdictions. The monarchy, which had only very gradually raised its head above the different strata of feudalism, still found their *débris* on its path, and often in large and heavy masses. The principle of rational fitness and expediency, which in modern states pervades and unites every branch of public business, was, at that period, unknown. There was an utter want of a systematic and acknowledged demarcation of contending rights. Their respective limits were only found by the actual result of a contest between the government and the privileged orders, in each particular case. Although the king claimed the unconditional right of raising taxes, and exercised it at his will in the old crown lands, the more lately acquired border provinces watched over their privileges and charters with restless jealousy; and thereby succeeded in obtaining much more favourable treatment than their neighbours, in the matter of taxation. In the departments of police, finance, and home administration, the king could appoint to offices at his pleasure; but it was regarded as a binding rule—which

was only to be deviated from on very rare occasions,—that all the higher posts in the church, the army and the court, were to be bestowed exclusively on members of the nobility. While, in most parts of the country, the government was free to administer affairs as it thought fit, there still existed some provinces in which the local Estates possessed important rights and great authority; as, for example, Languedoc, Burgundy, Bretagne, Artois, Bearn, and a number of smaller districts. Annual assemblies were held, composed of bishops, nobles, and the magistrates of cities. These bodies had to give their consent to every new tax, to vote an annual voluntary grant to the king, and to fix the quota to be paid by the inhabitants of their province. Of the sums thus raised they retained a considerable portion in their own hands, and employed it in the maintenance of the roads and canals, breeding-studs, and hospitals of the land. Their right of granting or refusing these supplies was, according to the law, entirely absolute. Before they voted a fresh grant, they inquired whether the government had fulfilled the promises made in the preceding year. It is true that the king, on his part, maintained an equally unlimited claim to the obedience of all his subjects, in opposition to their votes; and in general he carried his point, as was natural, from his superior power, and as was, in most cases, conducive to the public good.

But the omnipotence of the state was opposed by the far more powerful corporation of the clergy. The king possessed the right of appointing the bishops and a number of ecclesiastical officers; but when once they were appointed, they administered the affairs of the church in almost entire independence of the king's government. In the few cases in which there was room for secular influence—such as appeals against the abuse of ecclesiastical authority—the creation of new endowments—or the acquisition of new estates or legacies—it was not the king alone, but the supreme courts or "parliaments," in common with the crown, who

held the decision in their hands. The clergy exercised a most potent influence on the mass of the people; and one may attribute the persecution of the Hugenots as much to the popular passions worked upon by the church, as to the intolerance of the king. During the whole of the 18th century, no one in France had a legal right to live out of the pale of the catholic church. The heretic was excluded, as a matter of course, from all political privileges; and as the parish priests had the exclusive care of the registers, the Calvinists had no means of proving the legitimacy of their own birth, or their hereditary rights to property. The whole system of education in all its stages was, like the cure of souls, entirely in the hands of the church. The great majority of the teachers were either clergymen, or persons appointed by ecclesiastical authorities. Some of the scholastic appointments were made by the city *communes*, or the provincial Estates. But the crown, with the exception of five or six special schools, had no influence at all on the education of the rising generation. The clergy gave their instructions gratuitously. Their schools were therefore numerously attended, and a certain amount of classical knowledge was widely diffused among the higher classes. In addition to these means of spiritual influence, the church derived great importance from the possession of immense and well-managed landed property, seignorial authority over many thousand peasants, as well as an income of 130 million francs, derived from tithes and a variety of other dues. Of this enormous wealth the clergy gave the state no more than they thought fit; and long after the imperial Estates had ceased to meet, the assemblies of the clergy continued to be regularly held, and were almost entirely free from royal influence.

Not only the church and national education, but even the administration of justice, had assumed in ancient France a peculiar and corporative character. Here, too, unity and suitability of organisation were out of the question. The

legal tribunals were a congeries of old remnants and new experiments, existing side by side, amidst continual collisions and disagreements. The feudal Seigniors, or the civic authorities everywhere possessed an inferior, and sometimes a superior, jurisdiction over their fiefs. The superintendence over these feudal judges, and the decision of the more important causes, were entrusted to the royal *baillages*, or tribunals of the royal domains: a certain number of which—under the name of præsidial courts—served as courts of appeal. But in none of these courts was the extent of their powers either definitely or unchangeably fixed. They were continually crossed and disturbed by the privileges of birth, office, and rank; and though the legal procedure was the same through the whole empire, the protection of the law was weakened by a mass of local customs and police regulations. The Parliaments, originally nine, afterwards fifteen, in number, formed the supreme legal tribunals; of these, the parliament of Paris held the highest rank, from the great extent of its jurisdiction, and the authority of its magistrates; but they were all filled with the consciousness of their real independence and sovereign power, and could agree, neither among themselves, nor with the inferior courts, nor even with the royal council, as to the limits of their functions. They interfered very largely both with the legislation and general administration of the country. They maintained that no royal *ordonnance* had any legal force until it had been entered on the register of the parliament, and that they had the right to protest against such registration, both on legal grounds and in the interest of the public. They issued orders and directions to the police, and pronounced judgment on any illegal measures of government officials. In a state of open rivalry with the church, they prided themselves on protecting the state and the private citizen against the encroachments of the hierarchy. Their tendency to oppose the church not unfrequently gained them the favour of the crown; but on other occasions their stub-

born wilfulness proved highly embarrassing to the government. The king, indeed, generally compelled them to register the laws they had rejected, forbid them to prosecute the accused magistrates, and banished disobedient members. In most cases the parliaments were thus forced to yield; but they insisted all the more strongly on their rights in principle, and adhered to them on every fresh occasion with immovable tenacity. The relation of the members of these courts to the monarch himself may be easily conjectured from the fact, that their offices, if not attached to some feudal domain, were sold as hereditary possessions; so that the crown had nothing at all to do with filling them when vacant. If the government was of opinion that any tribunal administered justice inefficiently, it had no other legal remedy than to set aside the verdict on the ground of a formal error, or to put a new interpretation on the law, or (in accordance with a hazardous practice of the early middle ages) to summon the parties before their own tribunal, and try the cause *de novo*. They never thought of removing any of the judges by dismissal, translation, or promotion. It was exactly the same in other branches of the public service. Very few of the French monarchs had managed their pecuniary affairs with prudence. On the contrary, most of them, from negligence, ambition, or love of pleasure, were in continual want of money. Ever since the end of the 15th century the deplorable custom prevailed of selling public offices; and, from the time of Henry IV., of making them hereditary in the family of the purchaser. Thus arose a numerous and independent aristocracy of state officials. To enhance the value of these offices, the government attached to many of them a patent of nobility; and to all of them, exemption from the most burdensome of the taxes. The number of the places thus sold—many of which were created solely that they might be sold—was immense. Richelieu, it is said, abolished 100,000 of them; Colbert reckoned the value of those which existed in his time at 500 million francs. They existed in every department of the

public service; in the court and army, in the customs, in the woods and forests, the *communes* and the guilds. In all these departments the state had renounced, for a small sum of money, the right of controlling and superintending its own organs. Louis XIV., however, was not of opinion that it was impossible to govern the country with such a constitution. The main object in his eyes was, that the possessors of privileges should be brought, as individuals, to obey his command, in each particular case. There was no human passion which he did not appeal to for the accomplishment of his purpose. Irresistibly charming in his youth, dignified and awe-inspiring in his latter years, he was unsurpassed in the art of personal influence. He appealed to the vanity of the nobles—the lust of power of the magistracy,—the controversial bitterness of the clergy,—and the avarice of all men. When neither flattery, nor intrigue, nor bribery—employed as they were to the fullest extent, and according to an elaborate system—were sufficient to carry his point, he did not scruple, in the consciousness of his divine calling, to resort to intimidation and violence. His troops were marched against refractory districts, unmanageable magistrates were crushed by quartering troops upon them, and hundreds of troublesome opponents were got rid of by arbitrary imprisonment. From insignificant beginnings, a royal administration was gradually developed, which extended its operations over the whole empire; and being under the sole and absolute control of the minister of finance, soon made its influence felt in every sphere of the national life. Ever since the time of Richelieu, a royal functionary, removable at pleasure, was appointed, under the name of *intendant*, over every province, who had likewise removable assistants, or *subdélégués*, under him in each of his districts. His original province was to take care of the financial interests of the state; but he soon extended his influence in all directions—subjected the *communes* to strict surveillance, threw the noble landowners into the shade, and placed every part of the province un-

der the supervision of a strong police. However numerous the privileges, corporations, and exemptions by which this new authority was surrounded, the King had now in every quarter an energetic and ever ready instrument, if not to rid him of his opponents, at any rate to bend them to his will. The provincial Estates grumbled at times, but they granted all that was demanded of them: the magistrates protested, but in the end resigned themselves to defeat. The nobles hung trembling on every word and look of the monarch, and the clergy overflowed with enthusiastic devotion. For many years Louis was raised to such a height above the world, that the distant tones of complaint or opposition but rarely reached his royal ear.

But could an enduring prosperity be reared on such foundations?

Such a possibility can hardly be disputed. The strength of the monarchy at that period was not in itself injurious to the country; on the contrary, it represented, with splendour and success, the unity of the nation, the power of the state, and the requisites for the public weal. If, on the other hand, we look for constitutional freedom,—the corporations, Estates, and parliaments, afforded the living germs of a liberal polity. The task of bringing these germs to full maturity was indeed difficult enough. France at that period, as we have already observed, had neither an administration nor a constitution systematically arranged. The various institutions existed side by side, complicated and clumsy in their form, thwarting or supporting one another according to the positions which the accident of their origin had given them. No doubt long and patient toil would have been necessary to reform them to such a degree as to produce an equilibrium between power and freedom, between centralisation and self-government, between the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of feudal orders. The problem was infinitely difficult, but not impossible, to be solved.

Its solution needed no greater abilities than were possessed

by the potentates of the 18th century; but it did require strong and decided political morality, which alas! grew more and more rare from generation to generation.

As matters stood under Louis XIV., the crown alone could have initiated such a reformation. It had grown up to its fulness of power, by a vigorous advocacy of the public interest. If it desired to secure its future prosperity, it must continue to watch over the public good, even at the cost of its own supremacy. It had grown strong through the narrow selfishness of the feudal Estates; to retain its strength, it should have roused those orders from their inactive egoism, and educated them to labour for the public good—in other words, to political liberty. By these means, and these alone, would it have been possible securely to found the state, and with it the throne, on the only firm foundation—the active patriotism of all the citizens. The deepest wound from which France was at that time suffering, was the hostile schism between the different classes of the people, for which there was no other remedy than a genuine peace, and a joyful co-operation of all ranks, in which political privileges would be granted in exact proportion to the degree of public usefulness. The crown, which at that time stood in unassailable grandeur and almost unlimited power, far above the contest, possessed all the requisite means for the attainment of such an object. It only needed to employ them at the cost, if necessary, of the personal and arbitrary will of their possessor. For the great deed of raising the privileged orders of the nation from selfishness to freedom, is only possible when the national instructor uses his power, not in the service of his own selfwill, but of the public good.

Unfortunately for France and the Bourbons, Louis XIV. was very far from regarding his mission in this light. He had, indeed, done many great things for the welfare of his people. But the innate ambition of his character had been fostered by numerous successes into a colossal egoism. The virtual boundlessness of his power,—which was doubt-

less for a while advantageous to both state and people, — had inflicted the greatest injury upon himself. It is rarely granted to a human being to preserve the consciousness of his duty, when there is no outward influence to remind him of the rights of others. Louis, who regarded his office as a plenary power, mysteriously granted by the grace of God, and who was able to crush all resistance by material force, yielded, as many others have done, to the temptation to despise all earthly laws, and to place his pride, not in active patriotism, but in the omnipotence of his own passions. Unlimited political power had brought him to the same point to which the nobility had been reduced by political inactivity; and his high office was changed from an impulse to useful deeds, into a title to personal enjoyment. He neglected to meet the great claims which the state, in its gradual progress, continually made upon his attention. In the consciousness of his own strength, he neglected to reconcile the unceasing conflict between the royal administration and the rights of the feudal orders. He never thought of rousing the political sense of the people, by urging the higher classes to a well-regulated activity, and granting to the lower a fair share of political rights. In his omnipotence and self-glorification, he deserted the paths of the public good, for a policy of mere personal passion and ambition. By a series of plans of conquest, each more extravagant than the last, he plunged the country into fatally exhausting wars, and united the whole of Europe in common and successful opposition to French domination. By these means he injured the monarchy in two respects. In the first place he deprived it of the material basis of its power, by an incurable confusion of its finances;—which, on the one hand, rendered any alleviation of the burdens of the oppressed people impossible, and, on the other, forced the government out of its natural course. In the next place, since the deficit was constantly increasing, although the people were taxed to the utmost limit of endurance, even Colbert, and on a larger scale his successors, had recourse to the dangerous

expedient of multiplying the number of saleable offices to an incredible extent; and thus diffusing hereditary and exclusive privileges throughout the body politic. The state thus forfeited the right of filling up a new series of offices in the department of customs, and that of the woods and forests. In many towns the trade in timber, wine, and spirits was taken out of private hands; nay even the poor earnings of those who towed boats on the rivers, of porters and funeral mutes, were made a monopoly, and secured to certain families, exclusively, in consideration of a large premium, The worst result was that the moral influence of the throne was lost by these transactions. A nation can for a time put up with a judicious and farsighted despotism, if private prosperity and national power are seen to be promoted. But in this case famine prevailed in every province; the bark of trees was the daily food of hundreds of thousands; the army was demoralised by defeats, and the only result of Louis's *quasi* divinity was the evident ruin of the empire. His successors were destined to feel the effects of his policy. Immediately after his death the parliament of Paris set aside his will, without the slightest difficulty; the most important results of his internal policy were lost; and after violent commotions his youthful great-grandson had to enter afresh on the course of modern kingship.

This was Louis XV.; and we need only mention his name to bring the events which followed vividly before our eyes. If even Lous XIV. diminished his personal influence by carrying out his policy to dangerous extremes, his successor afforded an example of moral degradation, to which only the life of the most abandoned of all the Roman emperors can furnish a counterpart. The *bourgeoisie* learned to despise a throne which the king had sullied by his debaucheries; and the higher classes were poisoned in every vein by a zealous imitation of the royal vices. Louis XIV. had neglected to subject the privileges of the feudal Estates to any searching reform, because he virtually ruled them, and felt

himself more than a match for their united power. But his successor descended to their level, took part in their feuds, and endeavoured to subdue them, not by his own strength, but by setting them one against another. Thus he first humbled the parliaments to please the clergy and the jesuits. He then, at the instigation of the Marchioness of Pompadour, allied himself with the judicial nobles, to destroy the predominant influence of the church; and at last, through the influence of the Countess Dubarry, he again fell into dependence on the jesuit faction, when the power of the parliaments seemed growing too formidable. Each of these privileged classes employed their term of royal favour in multiplying their own privileges to the injury of the state and the people; and filled the period of their disfavour with democratic accusations against the despotism of the king's government. In either case the latter forfeited a portion of its power, or its popularity. Meanwhile the foreign influence of France met with more and more ruinous defeats. The alliance with Austria, which Madame de Pompadour concluded in 1756, has often been made the object of undeserving censure. It was not the entering into this alliance which injured France, but the wretched conduct of the war—which broke out with England at the same time—by the then ruling faction. When the same party was on the point of renewing the contest under Choiseul's auspices, after very creditable preparations, and with favourable prospects, it had to succumb to its jesuit opponents, who, from party hatred, condemned the war policy of the fallen ministers, and reduced France to complete insignificance in Europe. The subjection of the monarchy to the influence of the feudal faction was followed by national humiliation. This was the final blow to the credit of the ancient polity.

Such a condition of affairs must naturally throw an excitable nation like the French, the upper classes of whom were even at that time highly educated, into a state of the greatest ferment. Year after year, in spite of the censorship and

the Bastille, the criticism of public opinion became more and more general and impetuous. The current of European thought had long taken a revolutionary direction. After the chief authority of the middle ages—the church—had shown itself to be neither infallible nor united, there was for a time, no visible rallying point at all. The church had absorbed the state and the law, science and art, into itself, and had declared external nature and the world to be sinful and abandoned things. When therefore the church itself was divided, not only religious faith, but the whole condition and fate of the human race, became uncertain. A determination was everywhere manifested to acknowledge no existing creed or institution, without sufficient evidence of its intrinsic value; and, on the other hand, to trace out and appropriate, without regard to conventional obstacles, whatever contained within it the germs of genuine vitality. The Middle Ages had turned away from the material world; men now began to take triumphant possession of nature, as of some newly discovered treasure. The ancient Church had proclaimed the vanity and worthlessness of all earthly things; now every effort was directed to the development and improvement of man's material condition. The religious ages had laid the greatest stress on the sinfulness of man; now the idea of the image of God in man—of the dignity and value of the human mind—was brought prominently forward. These new principles struck the very heart of the *ancien régime*, which had never taken any notice of the individual man as such, but had only valued him according to his social or corporative rank. A claim arose—not indeed to overthrow the whole existing order of things—but to open the way to its hitherto exclusive privileges for every active and striving spirit. New political principles were working their way to to the surface, simultaneously with a hitherto unknown investigation of nature, and a creative philosophy. Everywhere men turned away from the ideal, because it did not seem secure and practical enough to satisfy

the urgent necessities of the times. The whole social atmosphere was filled with material and practical impulses, which were only gradually purified into civilisation and taste. As the religious middle ages had their *auto da fé*, so the new order of things was not without its mistakes and crimes; but while we blame the latter, we should not forget that the condition from which Europe was snatched by the Revolution, would appear to all of us, without exception, as the most intolerable barbarism. The enlightenment of the 18th century was for a time greatly over-estimated, even in its most worthless productions; we are now only too much inclined to overlook its historical services, because it is the common property of all, and has become the very ground on which we stand. But let him who is inclined to shrug his shoulders at its occasionally loose or hypocritical civilization, transplant himself into the utterly uncivilized period which preceded it. Neither classical nor christian antiquity, neither the middle ages nor the Reformation, took any offence at the worst horrors of warfare, or the tortures of a cruel criminal procedure, or the annihilation of political opponents; compared with which, all the horrors of our revolutions and re-actions are mere child's play. The idea that the life of each individual was of any value to his fellow men, only became a living power in consequence of the events of the last century.

The negative, destructive, side of this spirit—the repudiation of authority—found in France a soil in every respect favourable. For all her existing institutions were miserable in their operations and results; and, what was perhaps still more important, uncertain in their legal titles. The result of Louis XIV.'s mode of government was, that the monarchy possessed all the power, and the feudal orders all the right, so that the two elements of this double State mutually balanced each other in public opinion. There was scarcely a single unassailable point in the political law of France; it was quite natural, therefore, that the innovators should make the law

of nature and of man their starting point. The desire of reforming existing institutions—which in healthy nations is only exchanged for the impulse of destruction after utter failure,—was in this case hopeless from the very first. Some expressed themselves more mildly, others more rudely; some hoped to succeed by peaceful means, others by violent revolutions; some studied particular phases, others the whole structure, of political life;—but in whatever direction they carried their investigations, they all brought back the firm conviction of the utter worthlessness of the ancient system. It does not lie within our scope to examine in detail the multitude of theories which at that time filled the world; it will be enough if we distinguish the two main currents of opinion which assailed the old commonwealth. Both parties deeply felt the unjustifiable and injurious pressure of the privileges of the crown, the church, and the feudal orders; but while the one put forward a claim that the unconditional freedom of the individual should take the place of all these tyrannies, the other demanded that the rule of the hitherto oppressed majority should be set up in their stead. Voltaire and the *physiocrates* belong to the former, Rousseau and the socialists to the latter. At that period—about the middle of the last century—the important difference between these two theories was but little felt; they both worked amid endless personal feuds, and constantly changing combinations, under every conceivable form of literature, of social life, of freemasonry and secret orders, towards the common end—the destruction of all that was old. We cannot call these things the cause of the Revolution; we should be the less justified in doing so, because, from the low state of journalism,—the severe measures taken against the printing and sale of books,—the very small traffic of the country,—and the deep ignorance of the people,—all intellectual movement was almost entirely confined to high society, and rarely reached even the class of burghers. All that we can say is, that some of the leaders of the Revolution took their first direction

from this literature; we know, *e.g.* that Robespierre on all occasions quoted Rousseau. But the practically important part was played on this occasion—as on all others in which the violence of the masses is thoroughly let loose—not by a political theory, but by the passions of the people. But the effects of this theory on the privileged classes themselves, before the Revolution, were exceedingly powerful. As they were alternately in alliance or at feud with the government, they imbibed with equal eagerness the poison of courtly immorality, and the doctrines of radical opposition. The *parliaments*, which, as true members of the feudal system, still upheld the proscription of Protestantism, and the prohibition of loans on interest, asumed all the frivolities of the school of Voltaire in their contest with the Jesuits; and loudly joined in the cry for the extirpation of superstition. The court nobility learned under Choiseul's administration to pride themselves on freedom of thought; after his fall, they once more rallied round the external forms of religion, with a warmth of devotion which we may easily imagine, since the change took place under the auspices of the most abandoned of all the royal mistresses, the Countess Dubarry. It was just in the immediate vicinity of the throne, that the deepest roots were struck by the most radical opinions — by that philosophy of coarse materialism, according to which nothing is real but selfishness and sensual pleasure, and all besides an empty phantom of the imagination.

And thus, at the close of the shameful reign of Louis XV., the fabric of the ancient state was undermined in every part. The crown, by the vices of the King and the feebleness of its foreign policy; the feudal orders, by their mutual hostility, and their struggle with the crown; and both, by the rise of radical opinions. But the mass of the people derived no advantage from the change; the burden of the privileged monopolies, which were sown broadcast through the length and breadth of civil society, became more intolerable with the progressing decay of the state. The deeper the moral

degradation of the higher classes, the larger and more selfish were the claims they made upon the commonwealth. This was a melancholy consequence, not of personal passion alone, but, in a great measure, the inevitable result of the constitution of the state itself. The growing power of the crown deprived the nobility of all political influence; and the King's officers excluded them more and more from all political activity. The feudal seignior still appointed the domain judge, but he took little trouble to see that justice was done to his hinds; and he no longer paid any attention to the police, the administration, or the militia, of his district. All that was left to him of his former position was his honorary privileges, and exemption from taxes and other burdens, by which the community had formerly rewarded him for his political labours; and which now raised him, as the undeserving favourite of fortune, above his paying and serving fellow-citizens. As these privileges were the only things which reminded him of his rank, it was natural that he should regard the preservation of them, at all hazards, as his highest duty. Nobility, which had once been a public office, was now nothing more than a title to personal enjoyment. The natural state of things, that the most enlarged rights should entail upon their possessor the most onerous duties—and the most splendid privileges should imply the greatest public activity, was, under these circumstances, entirely reversed. The whole system tended richly to endow the higher classes, without demanding of them any services in return; and to exhaust the lower classes by oppressive taxation, without granting them any political rights.

In order to bring this matter, in its details, more clearly before us, we may pass in review the three great classes into which the French people were divided acording to their occupation.[1] By far the most important of these occupations,

[1] In drawing up the following statement we have chiefly consulted the *Statistique Ministerielle de la France*, and the admirable works of Moreau de

at that period, was agriculture. Nearly 21 out of 25 millions of inhabitants were employed in tilling the soil. Of the 51 million *hectares* of which the whole kingdom is composed, 35 millions were destined for cultivation, that is, rather less than at the present day, but more than twice as much as is now under cultivation in England. It has often been imagined that the property of these great masses of land was almost entirely in the hands of the church, the monasteries, the nobility, and the financiers; and that before 1789 only large estates existed, while the class of small proprietors was created by the Revolution. Some consider this supposed change as the highest glory, and others as the greatest calamity, of modern times; but all are agreed as to the fact; and the more so, because it was continually proclaimed in the debates of the revolutionary assemblies. But, on closer examination, we shall find that the effects of the feudal system upon agriculture are not to be looked for in this direction. We cannot rank the authority of the revolutionary orators very high, both because they had a political interest in breaking up the large estates for the advantage of the city proletaries, and because they always shewed themselves fabulously ignorant of statistics. If we examine the state of things before 1789, we shall find that—apart from the feudal tenures and the church property—even the old French law of inheritance by no means favoured the accumulation of estates. The nobility, indeed, were often heard to complain that the *roturiers* were constantly getting possession of land; which is intelligible enough, since the monied classes were continually gaining ground on the ancient aristocracy. It follows that there was nothing in the circumstances of the age to render the division of land impossible; and one of the most credible witnesses, after three years investigation in all the French provinces, tells us, as the result of his observations, that about

Yonne; and also Lavergne, *Économie rurale*. The latter gives much information respecting the earlier state of things, which now and then, however, requires examination and correction.

a third of the land was held by small proprietors, who were sufficiently prosperous in Flanders, Alsace, Bearn and the north of Bretagne, but in other parts, especially in Lorraine and Champagne, poor and miserable. The division of property, he observes, is carried to too great an extent; "I have frequently seen properties of 10 roods with a single fruit-tree; excessive division ought to be forbidden by law."

This witness is Arthur Young, one of the first agriculturists of the period in Europe, who gave this testimony after indefatigable inquiry; and his report is confirmed by native authorities.

"The subdivision of land," says Turgot "is carried to such an extent, that a property, only just sufficient for one family, is divided among five or six children." "The landed estates," writes an *intendant*, "are broken up systematically to a very alarming degree; the fields are divided and subdivided *ad infinitum*." Such was the case among the small proprietors;[1] the other two-thirds of the soil was entirely in the possession of the great landowners—consisting partly of the nobility and clergy, and partly of magistrates and financiers. We shall presently inquire, in what manner they turned their lands to profit; but we may first of all observe, that a middle class of proprietors, substantial enough to derive from their land a sufficient livelihood, and yet humble enough to be bound to constant and diligent labour, was entirely wanting. In the present day the landed proprietors of France may be divided into three sections, each of which possesses about one third of the productive soil of the country. 18 million hectares belong to 183,000 great landed owners; 14 millions to 700,000 proprietors of the middle class, and 14 millions to not quite 4 millions of peasant owners.[2] When we compare these figures with those of the pre-revolutionary period, we find the number of poor possessors exactly cor-

[1] Quoted by Tocqueville, *L'ancien Régime, 60.* — [2] Cochut, *Revue de deux Mondes,* Sept. 1848. Rossi, *Économie Politique*, p. 325, et seq.

responding to one another; and, what is very remarkable, they are almost exactly the same in 1831 as in 1815. The most fearful storms pass over the surface of the land without producing any change in these relations. But what the movement of 1789,—the emancipation of the soil, and civil equality,—did produce, is this middle class of proprietors, which now possesses one-third of the land. It must be confessed that this is a most remarkable result. How often has it been announced by feudalists and socialists, that entire freedom of trade would inevitably lead to the annihilation of the middle classes, and leave nothing but millionnaires and proletaries! We here see the very contrary proved by one of the grandest historical facts. The feudal system, by its restrictions, crushed the agricultural middle class; the rule of freedom created it afresh. Let us, however, consider the position of these lords of the soil and their dependents more closely.

The first fact which meets us in this investigation is an unhappy one. It was only an excessively small minority of the great landowners, who concerned themselves about their estates and tenants. All who were at all able to do so, hurried away to the enjoyments of the court or the capital, and only returned to their properties, to fill the purse which had been emptied by their excesses. There they lived in miserly and shabby retirement; sometimes in wretchedly furnished castles, shunned by the peasants as pitiless creditors; sometimes in the midst of forests and wastes, that they might have the pleasures of the chase close at hand. They took as little interest in intellectual subjects, as in agricultural affairs, and cherished little or no intercourse with their neighbours; partly from parsimony, and partly from the entire want of local roads. When the period of fasting was over, they rushed eagerly back to the alluring banquets of Paris and Versailles. The number of exceptions to this melancholy rule was so small as to exercise no influence on the general condition of the country.

While these gentlemen were squandering the produce of their estates in aristocratic spendour, their fields were let out in parcels of 10 or, at most, 15 *hectares*, to the so-called *métayers*, who did not pay a fixed rent, but generally half the gross produce, and received from the owner, in return, their first seed corn, their cattle and agricultural implements.[1] This system yielded a wretched existence for the tenants themselves, and reduced the estates to a miserable condition, but it brought the owners a large though uncertain income. The latter, who only saw their estates as travellers, were accustomed to farm out the collection of their dues, generally to a notary or an advocate, who treated the peasants with merciless severity.

The peasants, in their turn, neglected the cultivation of corn—of which they had to give up a moiety—for any chance occupation, the whole profit of which fell to themselves; they used their oxen rather for purposes of transport than for ploughing, fattened their geese in their own wheat fields, and, above all, introduced the system of alternating crop and fallow, in order to get a greater extent of pasture, and consequently a larger number of cattle. This was a personal gain to themselves, but evidently brought no advantage to the estate. A system of tillage, in short, prevailed without industry, without science, and above all, without capital. It has been calculated that the average amount of capital employed at that period in the French *métairies*, was from 40 to 60 francs to the *hectare*; while in England, at the same time, the average amounted to 240 francs.[2] The result was, of course, a wretched one; they only reckoned upon a crop of from 7 to 8 *hectolitres* of wheat to the *hectare*—the increase being from five to sixfold; while the English farmer of that time obtained a twelvefold increase. It was impossible for the peasant under

[1] Quesnay in Daire, *Physiocrates*, p. 219 et seq. — *Young's Travels*, II. 190. — Lullin de Chateauvieux in *Mounier*, I. 270. — [2] Arthur Young, II. 249. The elder Mirabeau reckons, for the whole of France, 66 francs to the *arpent*.

such circumstances to gain a livelihood; the produce of 10 *hectares* was scarcely sufficient to support his family, and sale and profit were out of the question. The man who is thus condemned to pass his life in starvation, soon learns to fold his hands in idleness. A constantly increasing extent of country lay uncultivated, which Quesnay, in 1750, estimated at a quarter of the arable land of France, and Arthur Young, in 1790, at more than 9 million *hectares*. Millions of rural dwellings had no aperture in them but the door, or at most one window;[1] the people had no clothing but a home-made, coarse, and yet not thick, woollen cloth; in many provinces every one went bare-foot, and in others only wooden shoes were known. The food of the people was gruel with a little lard; in the evening a piece of bread, and on great occasions a little bacon; but, besides this, no meat for months together, and in many districts no wine at all.[2] The mental condition of the people was in accordance with their external circumstances. Books and newspapers were as little known in the villages as reading and writing. The peasants depended for their instruction on the pastors and parish clerks, proletaries like themselves, who very seldom got beyond the horizon of the church steeple. The Church was, after all, the only institution which threw an intellectual spark into their wretched life; but unfortunately their religious impulses were strongly mixed with barbarism and superstition. In many large districts of the South, the peasants had no other idea of a protestant, than as of a dangerous magician, who ought to be knocked on the head. Their own faith, moreover, was interwoven with a multitude of the strangest images of old Celtic heathenism. Of the world outside they heard nothing, for there was next to no traffic or travelling in the country, There were some royal roads, magnificently made, and sixty feet in breadth—splendid monuments of monarchical ostentation. On these, however,

[1] This is still the case. — [2] Reports of the Prefects to the Ministry, 1803.

up to 1776, only two small coaches ran,[1] throughout the whole of France; and the traveller might pass whole days without getting sight of any other vehicle.[2] Only a few villages, in the most favoured provinces, possessed cross-roads to these great highways, or to the nearest market town. And thus the whole existence of these people was passed in toil and privation; without any pleasures, except the sight of the gaudy decorations of a few church festivals; without any change, save when hunger drove an individual, here and there, to seek day-labour in the towns, or into military service. It was seldom that such a one ever returned to his father's house, so that his fellow-villagers gained no advantage from his wider experience.

Under these circumstances, the relation between peasant and lord was naturally a deplorable one. What we have already said, sufficiently characterises a community, in which all the enjoyments fell to the rich, and all the burdens were heaped upon the poor. In aristocratic England at this period, a quarter of the gross proceeds was considered a high rent for a farm, and the owner, moreover, paid large tithes and poor-rates.[3] In France, half the proceeds was the usual rent; and the owners were exempted by their privileges from many public burdens, which fell with double weight upon the wretched *métayers*. Thus, the produce of the French land, as compared with the English, was as 9 to 14, while the rents of an English landowner were at the rate of $2^3/_4$ per cent., and those of the French land owner $3^3/_4$ per cent.[4]

The deficiency in the product of the land, therefore, affected the gains of the little farmer doubly. In addition to this, he was burdened by a number of feudal services, by forced labour on the lands of his lord, by tithes to the church, and by the obligation to make roads for the state. The landlord who tried to sell his rent in kind as dearly as possible,

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[1] E. Daire, *Introduction aux Œuvres de Turgot.* — [2] *Young's Travels.* — [3] Yvernois, *Tableau des Pertes, &c.* — [4] Young.

wished for high prices of corn; the peasant, who, after paying his dues, did not raise enough for his own family, longed, like the city proletary, for low prices. In short, these two classes, so intimately connected with one another, had nothing at all in common; in education, in interests and enjoyments, they were as widely separated as the inhabitants of different quarters of the globe, and regarded each other respectively with contempt and hatred. When the peasant looked upon the towers of his lord's castle, the dearest wish of his heart was to burn it down, with all its registers of debt. Here and there a better state of things existed; but we can only bring forward two exceptions to the melancholy rule, extending over large tracts of country. In Anjou, the system of *métairie* prevailed as in Lower Bretagne and Guienne; and yet in the former province, the peasants were prosperous, and the noblemen beloved. Lower Poitou was the only province from which the nobles had not allowed themselves to be enticed into the whirlpool of court life. The nobleman dwelt in his own castle, the real lord of his domains, the cultivator of his fields, the guardian of his peasants. He advanced them money to purchase necessary stock, and instructed them in the management of their cattle;[1] the expulsion of a tenant was a thing unheard of; the labourer was born on the estate, and the landlord was the godfather of all his farmer's children. He was often seen going to market with his peasants, to sell their oxen for them as advantageously as possible. His mental horizon, however, did not extend beyond these honourable cares; he honoured God and the King, laboured in his own fields, was a good sportsman and toper, and knew as little of the world and its civilization as his tenants.

In the North of the kingdom a more modern state of things had grown up. There, wealthy farmers were to be seen, who held their land on lease at a fixed money rental—which was settled according to the amount of the taxes to

[1] Sauvegrain, *Considérations sur la Population, &c.* Paris 1806.

which they were liable—and who brought both skill and capital to the management of their land. This was the regular practice in Flanders, Artois, Picardy, Normandy, the Isle of France, and other smaller districts. In these parts the landlords had a certain revenue, and their land yielded twice as much as that which was in the hands of the *métayers*. The whole country wore the appearance of a garden, and the poorer neighbours found lucrative employment at the stately farmhouses. These were the same provinces in which Arthur Young met with small proprietors in a tolerable condition. If a peasant in this part of the country possessed a small strip of land near his cottage, large enough to grow some vegetables, food for a goat, or a few vines, he earned sufficient to supply the rest of his wants, in day wages from the farmers, or, as a weaver, from the neighbouring manufacturers.

His was a condition similar to the normal one of the peasant proprietors in France at the present day; who are not reduced farmers, but labourers who have invested their savings in land.[1] It was more difficult for these people to make a livelihood at that time than now, because there were fewer manufacturers and wealthy agriculturists. Except in the above-mentioned provinces, these petty proprietors were equally wretched and hopeless with the *métayers*, by whom they were surrounded; their only object was to rent a *métairie* in addition to their own pittance of land. They were in fact entirely lost sight of among the *métayers*, and this is the reason that French writers, in their descriptions of the so-called *petite culture* (plot farming), never make any special mention of them, but always confound them with the more numerous class by which they were surrounded. All authorities are agreed in estimating the amount of land cultivated in small parcels, at 27 million *hectares*, while only 9 millions were held at a money rent. The former, there-

[1] Rossi l. c.

fore, was nearly equally divided between the small owners, and the *metayers*, who paid their rent in kind.

In France, at the present day, nearly 23 million *hectares* are cultivated by small proprietors and *métayers;* about 8 millions[1] (the same as in 1780) by tenants paying a money rent, and rather more than 9½ millions, by wealthy landlords.[2] Hence we can clearly see what the Revolution has done for French agriculture. Not only did it create the middle class of landowners, but greatly promoted a more rational system of tillage. About 4 million *hectares* have been rescued from the *petite culture*, and an equal number redeemed from utter barrenness. The breadth of land standing at a money rent is exactly the same as before the Revolution. The increase is entirely in the properties of rich or substantial landowners, who manage their own estates,—which indicates a change to more zealous industry, coupled with the employment of greater capital. The extent occupied by the *métayers* is still very great, and the condition of those who are subject to it but little improved, notwithstanding the abolition of socage and seigniorial rights. It will be one of our most important tasks, to examine the several events and tendencies of the Revolution, in relation to their effects on the rural population.

If we turn our attention to the towns of ancient France, we find that similar causes produced effects corresponding to those we have just described. The civic offices, to which persons had formerly been elected by the districts, or the guilds, had been frequently filled up by the crown in the 17th century; and in the 18th, the great majority of them were sold in hereditary possession to fill the exchequer.[3] The government of the towns, therefore, was in the hands of a close corporation consisting of a few families, who, generally

[1] Quesnai, Turgot, Young. — [2] On this point Lullinde Chateauvieux and Cochut are in the main agreed. Lavergne's figuresare somewhat different, but the general result is the same. — [3] Depping, *Correspondence administrative de Louis XIV.* Vol. II., Introduction.

speaking, allowed themselves to be infected with the indolent and self-seeking spirit of the central government. Associated with these were the families of the monied aristocracy, the members of the great financial companies, the farmers of the indirect, and the collectors of the direct, taxes, the shareholders of the trading monopolies, and the great bankers. These circles, too, were either legally or virtually closed to the general world. The *bourse* was ruled by an aristocracy, to which only birth, or the permission of government, could give access. Their activity was of course necessarily centred in Paris. Indeed, they stamped their own character on this city, to a degree which would be impossible in our age, notorious though it be as the epoch of the rule of paper. Every one knows to what a dizzy and ruinous height stock-jobbing was carried by Law, in the beginning of the century; and from that time forward, its operations were never suspended, and all who had wealth or credit engaged in it with reckless greediness. King, nobles, ministers, clergy, and parliaments, one and all took part in these transactions; and the chronic deficit, and increasing debts, of the treasury afforded constant opportunities of involving the state, and making a profit out of its embarrassments. We may confidently assert that, as compared with the present day, the speculative swindling of that age was as prevalent and as shameless as its immorality. Paris was not at that time a manufacturing town, and its wholesale trade was insignificant; with few exceptions, therefore, the industry of the city consisted in retail trade and the negotiation of bills of exchange. It is not the least characteristic feature of the indolent and selfish licentiousness, into which the higher classes of the great nation had fallen, that of all securities, life annuities were most in favour; by means of which the purchaser procured high interest for himself, while he robbed his children of the capital.

The trade and commerce of the whole empire was fettered by the restrictions of guilds and corporations. The principles on which they were conducted dated from Henry III., who

was the first to promulgate the proposition, that the King alone can grant the right to labour—a maxim which contains the whole doctrine of the socialists from a monarchical point of view. The masters of every handicraft managed its internal affairs, allowed no one to practise it who did not belong to their guild, and admitted no one to their privileges, until he had passed an examination of his qualification before themselves. Originally many trades were free from this organisation, until these too were injuriously affected by the financial necessities of the state; when the exclusive rights of a guild were sold to the artizans, as their offices were to the judges. The government soon further proceeded to divide each trade into several guilds, and made an exclusive corporation of the most insignificant occupation. Thus the workers in ebony were distinguished from the carpenters, the sellers of old clothes from the tailors, and the pastrycooks from the bakers. The fruit-women and flower-girls formed separate exclusive associations, regulated by formal and binding statutes. In the guilds of the seamstresses, embroiderers, and dressmakers, only men were admitted to the privileges of masters. A number of these statutes, by imposing excessive fees and duties, rendered it doubly difficult for an apprentice, however capable, to obtain the rank of master. Other enactments only admitted the sons of masters, or the second husbands of the widows of masters, to the privileges of the guild. In short, the power of the state was abused in the most glaring manner for the furtherance of exclusive class interests. Those who did not belong to this aristocracy of trade, could only support themselves by the labour of their hands, in a state of eternal servitude. Despair and famine drove the peasants from the country into the towns, where they found no employment open to them but that of day-labourers. The important influence which this system exercised over the state was clearly understood, both by the privileged and the excluded classes. When Turgot abolished the guilds in 1776, the

parliament of Paris, the princes, peers and doctors, unanimously declared that all Frenchmen were divided into close corporations, the links of a mighty chain, extending from the throne to the meanest handicraft; and that this concatenation was indispensable to the existence of the state, and of social order. It was not long before the guilds were reestablished in accordance with this declaration; we shall see how the journeymen and apprentices replied to this unctuous manifesto some fifteen years later.

The great manufacturing interests of the country were confined by the same narrow restrictions. Since the time of Colbert, who was the real creator of them, manufactures had been the darling child of the government; and, as is usually the case with darling children, had been petted and tyrannized over at the same time. When Colbert began his operations, France produced neither the finer kinds of cloth, nor stockings,—neither silks nor glass—neither tar nor soap. The previously existing handicraft—which had been for a century in the fetters of the guilds—had done so little to develope the native manufacturing talent of the country, that the minister was obliged to introduce German, Swedish and Italian workmen. To secure a sale in foreign countries, he prescribed with great exactness the sort of fabric which he wished to be produced; and to prevent competition from without, he enacted a number of prohibitory and protective duties. Here again, the power of the state intruded itself into the sphere of private business, to the advantage of the manufacturer and the injury of the consumer. The same system was continued by his successors with still worse effects, because it was carried out with all the fickleness and irregularity of Louis XV.'s government. It is true that manufactures made great progress, and increased their annual products six-fold, from the time of Colbert to that of Necker.[1]

[1] This was the proportion in the woollen manufacture.

But the statutes became more oppressive every year; every new invention and improvement was excluded by them; and after 1760, no legislation could keep pace with the progress of machinery. Manufactures, therefore, as is everywhere the case under such circumstances, no longer adapted themselves to the natural wants and capacities of men, but immediately took an artificial and aristocratic direction. During Colbert's ministry, while only 60,400 hands were employed in the manufacture of wool, no less than 17,300 were engaged in lacemaking; and a hundred years later, while the manufacture of soap only produced 18 million francs a year, that of hair-powder was estimated at not less than 24 millions. The contrast between the aristocratic luxury of the rich, and the uncleanly indigence of the populace, can hardly be more glaringly displayed.

Agriculture experienced in every way the disadvantages of a system, which crippled communication with foreign countries, raised the price of farming implements, and injuriously affected the home trade. In their eagerness to protect manufactures, the government had learned to look on the interests of agriculture as of secondary importance. They accustomed themselves, like the modern socialists, to apply the word *people* exclusively to the manufacturing classes in the towns; and though they sacrificed the interests of the latter in a thousand ways to the privileged monopolists, yet philanthropy, and love of quiet, cooperated in inducing them to supply the necessities of the poorer artizans, at the cost of the agricultural population. As supplements to the protective and prohibitory duties in favour of manufactures, decrees were issued forbidding the exportation of corn and other raw agricultural products. By these artifices the price of the *hectolitre* of wheat, which on the average is at present 19 to 20 francs, was in 1764 forced down to less than 8 francs.[1] Choiseul then opened the trade, and the price rose to more

[1] Melier, in 10th Vol. of the *Mémoires de l'Academie royale de Médecine.*

than 15 francs. A similar result followed the same measure in 1775, during the ministry of Turgot; but a return to protection reduced the price once more to 12¾ francs, until the Revolution. The city artizans had tolerably cheap bread, but nowhere in the kingdom were the farmers prosperous. In spite of the most violent complaints from all the provinces, the cause of the evil, and consequently the evil itself, remained unchanged. The government adhered to the conviction that it was their immediate duty to provide for the maintenance of the population of the towns. It seemed to them a matter of course, that the state should use its political power for the advantage of its rulers and their favourites. No one considered the remoter consequences of such a principle; no one asked the question: — "What if this power should fall into democratic hands?"

Let us endeavour to obtain a general view of the wealth of France at this period. From the imperfection of official information, the task is a difficult one, and its results uncertain. Even an approximation to the truth, however, will not be without interest, since, in order not to bring forward unmeaning figures, we shall constantly institute a comparison with the now existing state of things.

The well-informed Tolosan—the only authority on this subject—estimates the total produce of manufactures at 931 million francs; that of handicraft at 60 millions. At the present day[1] the manufactures of Eastern France alone,—not reckoning handicraft—produce 2282 millions; the sum, total therefore has been at least quadrupled. At the former period it amounted to 39 francs per head of the whole population; at present we might unhesitatingly place it at more than 100 per head. The emancipation of the internal trade since 1789 has not only raised the amount of property produced, but—what has so often been called in question—has

[1] In 1853. In 1860 a total of 5 milliards was reached. Boiteau, *État de la France en 1789*, pr. 506.

favorably influenced the manner in which it is distributed. The daily wages of the manufacturing labourers in 1788, according to a rather high estimate, were for men 26 sous, and for women 15.[2] They are now, according to the most numerous and trustworthy observation, 42 sous for men, and 26 for women. The daily wages of the agricultural labourers, too, can certainly not be reckoned at more than 15 sous[3] for the year 1789, or at less than 25[4] in the present day. If we further take into account the very considerable increase in the number of working-days—arising from the abolition of 30 holidays,—we shall find the annual wages of the earlier period, to be little more than half what they now are, *viz.* 351 francs for the manufacturing, and 157 for the agricultural labourer, against 630 and 300 at the present day. To appreciate the significance of these results, we must compare the prices of provisions at these two periods. It appears then, that before 1789, bread was considered very cheap at 3 sous per pound, and it was only in Paris that this rate was a common one; in the provinces, the price was generally higher. In our own times, the average price for the whole of France from 1820 to 1840, was 17 centimes, while at Paris, in 1851, it was 14 cents,—less therefore than the old rate of 3 sous. This seems out of proportion to the price of corn; since the *hectolitre* of wheat in 1780 cost from 12—13 francs, and in 1840 from 19—20. This apparent incongruity, however, is accounted for by the improvement in the method of grinding and baking, by which a third, or even a half, more weight of bread is now obtained from the same quantity of corn, than in the former period.[1] We find therefore that the labourer received for his wages little more than half the quantity of bread, which the modern workman can obtain for what he

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[1] Young. *Assemblée Nationale*, 15th Jan. 1790, 11th Aug. 1791. —
[2] Boitean thinks 19 to 20 sous. —
[3] Lavergne says 30 sous, p. 57. —
[4] Before 1789 the *Septier* (240 pounds) of wheat yielded only 180 pounds of bread: *Moniteur*, 12 July 1792, supplement.

earns. The same proportion holds good in other kinds of food, and in regard to clothing the comparison is still more unfavourable to the ante-revolutionary period.

We shall discover the determinate cause of these differences, when we come to consider the main wealth of the French empire—the produce of the soil in the widest sense of the word. It would carry us too far, if we were to examine every branch of the subject, and discuss all the difficulties connected with it; it will be sufficient to dwell on a few of the principal points of interest. Of wheat, the great staff of life, the soil of France produced, before the Revolution, about 40 million *hectolitres*—or 167 *litres* per head of the population—and in 1840, 70 millions—or 208 litres per head. At the former period the number of cattle was calculated at 33 million head; and at the present day at 49 millions; and there is an equal increase in the number of the other domestic animals. The vineyards formerly yielded 27 million *hectolitres*, and at present 37 millions; so that the proportion, per head, is at any rate not lower than it was.[1] And if we take into consideration that a number of useful agricultural products were at that time unknown, that a violent controversy was carried on about the wholesomeness of potatoes, that the forests were allowed to run to waste far more than at the present day,[2] we shall not be astonished that the best statist of modern France estimates the vegetable produce of the French soil, (which now exceeds in value the sum of 6,000 millions), at not more than 2,000 millions at the period before the Revolution.[3] The importance of this fact is suffi-

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[1] Moreau de Yonnès, from contemporary sources. I have followed him because space does not allow me to give my reasons for thinking a much more unfavourable state of things in 1770 highly probable. — [2] *Mémoire remis aux Notables*, 1781. *Young's Travels*, III. 111. Moreau, *Agriculture*, 366. — [3] The calculation, of Young agrees with this. Tolosan Dedeley d'Agier, Lavoisier, make the amounts higher. (Boiteau, *État de la France en 1789*, p. 481, compares their statements). But the uncertainty of their calculations is very perceptible.

ciently evident; and we may gain an idea of the state of the population before 1789, by remembering, that even now the total consumption of food in France is not greater in proportion to the population than in Prussia, and much less than in England.[1]

Respecting commerce,—the third great branch of national wealth—I have but little to say. I am not aware that any statistical data exist of the internal traffic of France before the Revolution; it was, no doubt, smaller than at the present day, in consequence of the multitude of inland duties. And with regard to the foreign commerce of the earlier period, we have no means of dividing the sum totals which lie before us, into the value of the raw materials, and the cost of manufacture, on the one hand, and the clear profits of trade, on the other. It must suffice us to gain a general idea of the relation between the two periods, from the summary statement, that in the custom-house registers, immediately before the Revolution, the annual imports are stated at 576 millions, and the exports at 540 millions; while as early as 1836, the former amounted to 905 millions, and the latter to 961 millions; and in 1857, both imports and exports had risen to a value of more than 1800 millions. Taking all in all, therefore, France under the old monarchy was four times as poor in manufactures, three times as poor in agriculture, and more than three times as poor in commerce, as it is in the present day. We must bear this result well in mind when we try to form a judgment respecting the finances of the *ancien régime*. A budget of 600 millions weighed as heavily upon the resources of the country at that period, as a budget of 1800 millions would now; and, consequently, a deficit of 100 millions was equivalent to one of 300 millions in our own times. Such a deficit actually existed when Louis XVI. mounted the throne; it is therefore easy to conceive that his attention should be strongly turned to

[1] Communications from the Prussian Statistical Bureaus, 1851.

the restoration of the balance between income and expenditure, and that his vain endeavours in this directions hould shake the fabric of the state to its very foundation.

A whole volume would be necessary to detail the different schemes of reform, which were brought forward between the accession of Louis XVI., and the outbreak of the Revolution. It will be sufficient for our purpose to notice the chief points, which have an important bearing on the antecedents, and the actual events of that mighty movement.

Louis the XVI. himself—as no one can doubt who has approached the sources of the history of this period—entered on the task of government with a heart *full of piety, philanthropy* and public spirit. He was earnest, and pure-minded, penetrated by a sense of his own dignity and the responsibilities attached to it; and firmly resolved to close for ever the infamous paths in which his predecessor had walked.

But, unhappily, his capacity bore no proportion to his good will. He was incapable of forming a decision; his education was deficient; he was awkward both in person and speech, and slow of comprehension. As he had a very limited knowledge both of the people, and the condition, of his empire, the selection of his ministers was, from the very outset determined by accident—the influence of his aunts, his queen, or the contending court factions; and as he was immovable wherever morality was concerned, but utterly helpless in the practical execution of his ideas, his was just a case, in which almost every thing depended on the aid of his nearest advisers. He possessed just sufficient sense of justice and benevolence to encourage every effort for useful reforms; but lacked entirely, that firmness of an enlightened judgment, which knows how to bring about a positive result, in spite of the opposition of existing interests. The inevitable consequences soon showed themselves. Anarchy, which under Louis XV. had reigned in the minds of men, now broke forth into overt acts. The sufferings of the

people, which individuals had hitherto borne in silent apathy, now occupied the attention of the masses.

That same chance which in his reign directed the management of public business, had given him, as his first minister Turgot, the greatest reformer of the day.

This great minister's strokes fell heavily on the existing system in every direction. Among his measures we find free trade in corn—abolition of the *corvée* in the country districts—liberation of trade from the trammels of the guilds—the erection of the *caisse d'escompte*[1]—a number of improvements and alleviations in the mode of raising the public taxes—and a prospect held out to all possessors of property, of a gradual increasing share in political rights; and it is under these heads that the restless activity of this liberal statesman may be best arranged. We may easily conceive that there was scarcely one of the privileged classes, which did not consider its previous existence imperilled.

Opposition arose in every quarter; the courtiers, the parliaments, the landed aristocracy, and the members of the guilds—all threw themselves into an attitude of defence, with noisy zeal. The contest penetrated into the royal family itself: Louis's younger brother, Count Charles of Artois, abused the minister, who, he said, was undermining the aristocracy, the prop and rampart of the throne; and a cousin of the King, the rich and abandoned Philip, Duke, of Orleans, began, amid the general excitement, to play the demagogue on his own account. Then, for the first time, a spectacle was seen in Paris, which was subsequently repeated in ever darker colours—the spectacle of the police authorities of the capital, stirring up the mob against the crown, and, on this occasion, in the interest of the privileged classes.

At first Louis XVI. declared, that he and Turgot were

[1] An institution for lending money for the furtherance of manufactures and commerce.

the only friends of the people, and stood firm against the the parliament of Paris and the street rioters: but he was not proof against the feebleness of his own character, and the wearing influence of those by whom he was daily surrounded. After an administration of nearly a year and a half, Turgot was obliged to yield to the reaction of the *ancien régime*, and almost all his creations collapsed at once. Then followed a long period of experiments and palliatives; the successors of Turgot would gladly have gone on in the broad track of traditional privileges, if their increasing financial difficulties had left them any peace. It was just at this time, that Louis resolved to support the North Americans against England, which he really did against his own will and the views of his ministers, who dreaded the expense of a great war, and clearly saw that the emancipation of the colonies would not weaken England. But the undefined longing for freedom, and the liberal political doctrines which had taken root far and wide in the land, prevailed over the scruples of the King and his counsellors. The Marquis of Lafayette, then a tall light-haired youth, full of vanity and ambition, who, on account of his ungraceful manners, had no success at court, fitted out a ship at his own expense, and sailed across the Atlantic. A number of influential persons cried out for vengeance upon England for the humiliation sustained in the Seven years' war; in a word, the warlike party carried their point, and war was declared against England. The consequence to France was a rapid spread of democratic sentiments on the American pattern. The followers of Rousseau were triumphant; here, they said, might be seen the possibility of a democracy on a broad basis—the construction of a state, on the foundation of the natural rights of man. Another consequence of the war was to throw fresh burdens on the public exchequer. The minister of finance at this time was Necker, a native of Geneva. Having come to Paris as a poor clerk, he had risen by his talents, and skill in business, to the position

of a rich banker; and with great self-complacency, had made his house the *rendez-vous* of the more distinguished members of the liberal party. By his influence with the *bourse* he procured a certain degree of credit for the State; and raised loan after loan to the amount of 500 millions, without any increase of the taxes, or any provision for a liquidation of the debt incurred. This was evidently sacrificing the future to the present, since the deficit became larger every year, as the interest of the public debt increased. Necker had the real merit of bringing some of the departments of finance into better order; he enjoyed, for the time being, unbounded popularity, and basked with delight in the universal acknowledgment, that he was the greatest statesman in Europe. Public confidence was freely given to a minister, who endeavoured to found his administration on credit alone—*i. e.* on the confidence of mankind. He was looked on as a perfect hero, when he introduced, with good results, provincial assemblies into Berry and Guyenne; and soon afterwards—breaking through all the traditions of the ancient monarchy—published a detailed, but unfortunately very inexact, and highly coloured report, on the state of the finances. But as he nowhere laid the axe to the root of the evil, he only roused a number of powerful interests by his attempts at innovation, but was utterly unable to close the source of financial confusion. He, too, soon saw no other means of recovery but limitation of the budget and economy in the expenses of the court; by avowing which, he made himself hateful to all the grandees of the antechamber, and was deprived of his office in May 1781. After two insignificant and inexperienced ministers had exhausted their strength in the years immediately following, the *intendant* of Lille, the gifted but frivolous Calonne, was called to the helm. He began with the proposition, that whoever wished for credit must cultivate luxury; and he renewed the prodigality of the court, in the style of Louis XV. After matters had gone on in this jubilant course for some years, and the

public debt had been increased by 400 millions, and the taxation by 21 millions, the ruin of the country became palpable at the beginning of the year 1787, and the catastrophe inevitable.

Let us here cast a glance at the budget of the *ancien régime*, the disorder of which was to give the signal of convulsion to every quarter of the civilised world. After Necker and Calonne, the Notables, and the Revolution, have quarrelled about its contents with equal mendacity, this budget now lies, in its most secret details, before the eyes of the historical inquirer.[1]

And first, with regard to the national income, which, as is well known, amounted to about 500 millions before 1789, nearly 800 under Napoleon, and then increased, during the period between 1815 and 1848, to 1500 million francs. However definite these figures may appear, we can by no means draw a conclusion from them, as to the cheapness of the respective modes of government above mentioned. We have already observed, that in proportion to the national wealth, a taxation of 500 millions before 1789, would be about equivalent to one of 1500 millions at the present day. In the next place we must make several additions to the round sum of 500 millions.

The income of the state in the year 1785 was calculated at 558 millions, to which were added 41 millions more, for the local administration of the provinces; a sum which was never paid into the treasury, but immediately expended in the different places where it was raised. Thus we find that the nation was bearing an annual burden of from 599 to 600 millions. At the same time the Church, whose expenses now figure in the budget of the state, raised 133 millions in tithes, and 16 millions in other dues and offerings.[1] The fees, which served as a complement to the judicial salaries,

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[1] Bailly, *Hist. financ. de la France*, II. 278. — [2] Louis Blanc, B. III. c. 3, estimates them, according to other authorities, not at 16 but at 30 millions.

amounted to 29 millions;[1] the seigniors raised about 2½ millions in tolls of various kinds, and at least 37 millions in stamp duties.[2] I pass over the feudal rents and services, the valuation of which is quite impossible. These, from their very nature, cannot be taken into account in speaking of the public burdens, and may very well be set off against the mortgage debts of the modern peasant-proprietors.

The items already mentioned, however, in addition to some of a similar character, amounted to 280 millions; so that the French people had, at that period, to bear a total annual taxation of 880 millions. If we compare this sum with the national wealth, we may unhesitatingly set it down as equivalent to an amount of 2,400 millions at the present day; it follows, therefore, that from the time of Louis XV. to that of Napoleon III. there existed but one government in France, which appropriated to itself a still larger proportion of the public income, than the *ancien régime*,—and that one was the government of the Jacobins during the Reign of Terror. The Empire, the Restoration, and Louis Philippe, contented themselves with far smaller sums; here too, feudalism finds its counterpart among the socialists.

When we inquire into the distribution of these taxes among the different classes of the people, we discover a glaring inequality. The higher ranks were not, indeed, exempt from taxation, but they were in many respects favoured. Of the taxes on consumption—which were valued at 308 millions—they bore, of course, a full share; but of the land and capitation taxes, (171 millions) they ought, as was discovered during the revolution, to have paid, on a fair distribution, 33 millions more than they actually did. In the next place, the maintenance of the public roads, which were entirely kept up by means of the *corvée*, at a cost of 20 millions,—and,

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[1] According to other estimates, 42 millions. Boiteau, *État de la France en 1781.* Paris 1861. — [2] For the sake of brevity I use this term to denote all the fees paid on change of property, *e.g. lods, relods, quints*, &c.

further, the expenses of the provincial militia,—about 6¼ millions—rested entirely on the shoulders of the lower classes. If we take into consideration the 40 millions quoted above, which the seigniors received from the peasants—the fact that the poorer classes of every town were responsible for the taxes of their *commune*,—even when their rich fellow-citizens escaped payment by the purchase of privileged offices—and, lastly, the scandalous unfairness in the imposition of the taxes on consumption, to which the helpless multitude was subjected by their superiors—we shall easily understand the triumphant fury, with which, in 1789, the peasants, more especially, received the joyful intelligence of the utter destruction of the system above described.

Great as was the proportion which it exacted of the national income, the government found itself, nevertheless, in a state of ever-increasing need and embarrassment. Disorder on the one side, and selfishness on the other, scattered its treasures to the wind. The case was the same in the financial administration, as in that of justice; no one had ever tried to organise it on any grand principle of wise adaptation to the end in view; on the contrary, a number of isolated jurisdictions—distinguished from one another according to provinces, or sources of income, or the destination of the funds in question—existed side by side, interfering with each other's operations, and destroying all responsibility. The amount of arrears due to the treasury—equal perhaps to half the annual budget—not even the Revolution has been able to ascertain; and it could only get hold of the profits of the farmers of the revenue by means of the guillotine. When once familiarised with deficits, the government soon fell into the stream of floating debts. The anticipation of the revenue of future years, at a usurious discount paid to the collectors themselves—the putting off the payment of debts which had fallen due—and the omission of expenditure prescribed by law—were the cause of equally enormous losses, when the day for liquidation at last arrived.

How widely this confusion spread, may be gathered from the actual cash accounts of the year 1785. By the side of the regular income of the treasury, of not quite 327 millions, there is another account of 340 millions income, and 407 millions expenditure, consisting of items which belong either to the earlier or later years of the period between 1781 and 1787; so that the sum-total amounts to nearly 850 millions. We see what a field was opened to speculators and the lovers of plunder, and to what a state such proceedings had reduced the prosperity of an empire, which a hundred years earlier, and twenty years later, dictated its will to Europe as a law.

The last feature in this state economy which reveals to us its character, is the kind of expenditure in which these treasures, collected with so much difficulty, were employed. The expenses of the court were stated in the official budget at 33 or 35 millions, but they were in reality 40 millions, which did not include the royal hunting expeditions and journeys, the salaries of the great officers of the court, or the maintenance of the royal palaces. The war office—the cost of which Necker states at 99 millions and Calonne at 114 millions—received 131 millions, of which rather more than 39 millions went to the administration, 44 millions for the pay and commissariat of the troops, and 46 millions for the salaries of the officers.

Entirely removed from all ministerial calculation were the money orders of the King himself, "for presents, &c., to courtiers, to the minister of finance and magistrates—repayment of foreign loans—interest and discount to the treasury officials —remission of certain personal taxes, and unforseen expenses of every kind." This class of expenditure, which is well characterised by the above heading, amounted in 1785 to 136 millions; in other years, the sum was rather smaller; but we may fairly assume that the annual average was more than 100 millions.[1] And

[1] We arrive at this result from the debates of the *Assemblée Constituante* (in April 1790) on the pensions, the *ordonnances à comptant*, and

whilst we thus see nothing but abundance and superfluity among the highest classes of society, the bridges and roads are only set down at 4 millions,—the public buildings at scarcely 2 millions—and the scientific institutions at rather more than 1 million; for which objects the budget of 1832, and the following years, granted 59 millions! The hospitals and foundling institutions received 6 millions from the state, 6 from the church, and had a revenue of 24 millions of their own; while the benevolent institutions of modern France (1832) had an annual sum of 119 millions at their disposal. In short, whatever portion of the financial affairs of this feudal state we investigate, we arrive at the same result, and find the people separated into two great classes, one of which was enriched at the cost of the other.

But as every such draining of the wealth of a nation bears within itself the germs of ruin, by drying up, on the one hand, the sources of income, and increasing, on the other, the passion for extravagance, the government found itself at the end of 1786 in the following condition. The regular annual income was 357 millions. The annual expenditure, according to the treasury accounts, amounted to 442 millions. In addition to this there were 27 millions for pensions, and 72 millions of urgent arrears from former years; and lastly, in the year 1787, there was a loss of 21 millions from the cessation of a tax, which had only been imposed for a period ending with that year. The deficit therefore amounted to 198 millions. Up to this time the government had helped itself by all the artifices, both bad and good, of a credit strained to the very utmost—and now utterly exhausted. An increase of the taxes was not to be thought of, on account of the enormous burdens by which the nation was already crushed. Under these circumstances Calonne, with genial frivolity, recurred to the serious and noble plans of Turgot.

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the *livre rouge*. Louis Blanc gives a number of details from these in B. IV. chap. 5.

He had hitherto lived on the favour of the privileged classes; he now endeavoured, by sacrificing them, to relieve the commonwealth. He congratulated the state on having within it so many great abuses, by the removal of which new sources of prosperity might be opened!

The opposition which Turgot had met with was of course directed, with redoubled fury, against Calonne.

A closely crowded throng of privileges rose tumultuously against his plans. The court nobility, the provincial estates, the tax-collectors, the courts of law, the police officers, the councillors of the *commune*, and the heads of the guilds, took up the contest against the will of the King and his ministers. But the development of modern ideas had made such progress, that the parties competed with one another for the power of public opinion. The ministry itself emancipated the press, in order to expose the advocates of the old system to the national contempt. The young nobles of the court, and in the provinces, armed the mob of Paris, and the peasants of Auvergne, against the ministers, and instigated them to violent excesses. An assembly of aristocratic notables, to whom Calonne submitted his schemes of reform, refused their assent, claimed the right of inspecting and superintending every department of the public service, and ended by declaring, that as they were nominees of the King, and not representatives of the nation, they were not competent to make new grants. Immediately after their dismissal, the parliament of Paris—which, next to the ministry, was the highest authority in the state—brought forward as a positive demand, what the notables had only negatively suggested. In a formal decree they demanded that an Assembly of the states-general should be called—an Assembly which the monarchy had dispensed with for 200 years. The ministry at first received this proposal with great disfavour; but as the want of money grew more and more urgent, the alluring hope arose in their minds of finding in the States-general, which was chiefly composed of burghers, a powerful support against the privileged classes. We shall

never understand the extraordinary success of the first revolutionary movements, unless we bear in mind what a large share in the government of the country was possessed by the higher orders and the corporations; and how they now mutually sought each other's destruction.

Calonne was not long able to make head against this noisy opposition. The last of the many blows which caused his fall was dealt by the Queen, whom he afterwards persecuted with inextinguishable hatred. His successor, Brienne, after a violent contest with the parliaments, resigned his office, when the convocation of the States-general had already been determined on, and the national bankruptcy virtually proclaimed. Louis had recourse to Necker again, who really relieved the financial embarrassment for the moment, and, recognizing the necessity of a liberal policy, fixed the meeting of the States-general for the 27th of April 1789. The ferment—which, owing to the preceding disputes, had for the first time since the religious wars penetrated the masses of the people—increased from hour to hour. The agitation was principally caused by the question, whether the States-general should meet, as before, in three separate chambers, or form a single Assembly, in which the *tiers état* should have a double number of votes. On this point the hitherto allied opposition parties differed—the aristocrats advocating the separation, the liberals the union of the three estates. Necker, with great want of tact, betrayed his own views by assigning the double number of votes to the *tiers état* while he induced the government to observe an obstinate silence on the main point in question. The public debates on this subject were all the more violent in consequence of this reticence; and in Bretagne it came to an open civil war between the nobility and the burghers.

The radical elements in France saw that their time for action was come; and the great dearness of provisions which prevailed during the winter months placed a large number of desperate men at the disposal of every conspirator. In

Paris the revolutionary demagogues gathered round the agents of the Duke of Orleans, and at the end of April tried their strength in a sanguinary street riot, which was professedly directed against the usurious avarice of a rich manufacturer, but really had no other object than to intimidate the moderate party, before the impending election of the States-general.[1] In other respects external quiet still prevailed in the provinces; but the feverish agitation of men's minds increased with every day; and in this state of things the elections by almost universal suffrage began to be held. Every electoral college was to entrust its instructions and complaints to its deputies according to mediæval custom. In every district, therefore, a long list of abuses was drawn up and examined; and brought home to the minds of the people at large, by means of discussion. A modern historian has justly observed that these complaints do not leave a single particle of the *ancien régime* untouched; that every thing was rejected by the restless desire of innovation — and that, unfortunately, neither the possibility, nor the method, of introducing reforms is anywhere pointed out. Revolution—universal and radical revolution,—speaks in every line of these documents. There was but one thought through the whole of France, that, thenceforward, a new era was to commence for the people and the empire, and that the work begun must be completed in spite of every opposition.

Whilst the millions in every part of the country were thus emancipating themselves from the bonds of traditional law—uncertain about their future, but firm in their resolution to proceed—the government was daily sinking more and more into utter helplessness. It had indeed a presentiment of the dangers which would accompany the breaking out of the new epoch, but its destitution was so complete that it eagerly longed for the commencement of the crisis. Money, one of

[1] This has been clearly and concisely shown by Croker in his *Essays on the French Revolution*, p. 50.

the great factors of material power, was not to be found in its coffers; and even the other, the army, was already affected by the general process of dissolution. This is perhaps the most important circumstance, with respect to the subsequent course of the French Revolution, and its difference from all those which have since taken place in Europe. The reason is simple enough; the French army was, in the main, organised according to the same principles as the other departments of the state; and like them had been thoroughly unhinged by the contests between the crown and the feudal orders, long before the breaking out of the Revolution. The nobility alone were eligible for commissions in the army; and though single exceptions to this rule really occurred, yet the monopoly was actually limited by a law of 1781 to noblemen of four descents. Twenty-seven regiments belonged to foreign or native grandees, and in these the owner of each regiment appointed the colonel, from a list drawn up by the minister at war; and the colonel appointed the other officers. The influence of the King's government, therefore, in the selection of officers, was limited to the composition of the list of candidates for the single office of colonel. In the other divisions of the army, indeed, the highest rank was in the gift of the King alone; but of the other commissions only one half were bestowed by the King, and the other half by the colonel. The officer, moreover, received his commission, after giving proofs of his fitness, on payment of a sum of money; it was a purchase for life, as, in the case of the courts of law, it was a purchase of an hereditary right. The duty of unconditional obedience was not indeed abrogated by this system; but it was inevitable, especially under a weak government, that the corps of officers should feel itself, what it really was, a part of that great aristocracy, which shared with the King the ruling power of France in every department of public life. The contest between this nobility and the ministry, by which the last years of the *ancien régime*

were filled, must, therefore, have had a deep effect upon the army. It frequently occurred that the officers, like the judges, with their colonels at their head, refused obedience. And as in the rural districts the opposition of the aristocracy was followed by excitement among the peasants, and the opposition of the towns by excitement among the artisans—so, in the case of the army, the popular movement found its way into the minds of the soldiers, and operated side by side with the class resistance of the officers. The common soldiers had felt the oppression of the *ancien régime* perhaps more deeply than the peasants themselves; for they were starving on a pay of 10 sous, whilst countless sums were employed in rich endowments for 1171 generals. They suffered all the insolence of the nobility towards the *canaille*, embittered by the weight of a severe and often brutal discipline; and like their fellow-citizens they looked forward to the meeting of the States-general as the signal of liberation from intolerable slavery. The number of regiments on which the government could reckon, was extremely small. The bands of discipline were loosened in every rank;—the officers inveighed against the despotism of the ministers, and the soldiers promised one another to do nothing against the people.

The ancient polity therefore was destroyed by its own internal discord and dissolution, before a single revolutionary word had been uttered. The government was destitute of money and troops to defend its position; and the feudal seigniors, though they had important individual rights, had no general organisation, which could enable them to replace the government. As soon as public opinion—which, guided by radical theories, emphatically rejected both the government and the aristocracy—obtained an organ of power in the States-general, it only needed to declare its will, nay, only to give expression to the facts before them, and the old system hopelessly collapsed in its own rottenness. What was to follow no man at that time was able to foresee. As most men were

extremely ill informed respecting the condition of the country, they indulged in hopes which were all the more ardent in proportion as they were undefined. But there were many who knew the poverty and brutality of the masses, the bitter hatred between rich and poor, and the selfish immorality of the upper classes—and looked, some with ambitious pleasure, others with patriotic anxiety, towards a stormy future.

CHAPTER II.

OVERTHROW OF FEUDALISM.

Opening of the States-General.—Contest of the orders respecting their union in one assembly.—The tiers état constitutes itself as national assembly.—The ministry takes the side of the nobles.—Speech from the throne.—First defection of the troops.—Second attempt of the aristocratic party.—Complete defection of the army.—Storming of the Bastille.—Universal anarchy in the kingdom.—Abolition of feudal privileges.

The opening of the States-general was fixed for the 5th of May 1789, and Versailles was chosen as the place of their meetings. On the 4th, half Paris poured into that town to see the court and the deputies marching in procession to the solemn religious ceremony, which was to inaugurate the important epoch. A countless multitude filled the streets, and the windows and roofs of the houses. When the deputies of the *tiers état* appeared, the air reverberated with cries of joy. The magnificent procession of the nobility and clergy, on the contrary, was received in the deepest silence; and it was not till the King approached that the tumult of thanks and greetings was renewed. On the following day, the States-general, to the number of 1200 persons, assembled in the spacious and richly decorated *salle des menus plaisirs*. The King appeared, surrounded by his family, with all the magnificence of the ancient court, and was greeted by the enthusiastic applause of the deputies and spectators. On a signal from the grand marshall that the King was about to speak, a death-like stillness succeeded to the tumult of voices; and Louis began his speech from the throne, the periods of which, full of

benevolent feeling, but poor in political ideas, were to open up a new era for France and Europe.

When the King had concluded, the keeper of the great seal, Barentin, rose, and pointed out to the deputies a wide, but too vaguely defined, sphere of activity. They would, he said, deliberate on the freedom of the press, and the liberty of the person; on public education and on criminal and civil law. They would know how, he added in a tone of warning, to distinguish between these wholesome reforms, and those dangerous innovations, which the enemies of the public weal desired to mingle with them. With regard to the immediate and decisive questions—respecting the functions of the Assembly, and its relation to its component parts,—the privileges of the clergy and the nobility,—and, lastly, the mode of voting, the minister expressed no will, but only hopes and wishes.

This was in itself a sufficient indication of helplessness and want of harmony in the ministry; but Necker, who succeeded Barentin, in a speech of three hours, made the matter still worse. He erred, not only in wearying the Assembly; in neglecting, like Barentin, to reserve for the government the right of decision on the question of the moment, viz. the mode of voting;[1] in contenting himself with expressing mere pious hopes for the harmony of the nobility and clergy; in bringing forward no definite proposal for financial reform, and in not at least securing for the government the initiative in this department;—all this was bad enough, and might alone have brought danger and ruin on the state; but, what was far more mischievous, he could not prevail upon himself to avow to the Assembly the real state of affairs.

He announced an annual deficit of 56 million francs, and thereby confused the mind of the public, which, since the

[1] Louis Blanc, B. I. ch. 8. "*Son vrai tort, ce fut de n'avoir pas décidé, par voie d'initiative, que les ordres vérifieraient leurs pouvoirs en commun, et formeraient dès l'origine, une même assemblée.*"

meeting of the Notables, had always been discussing a deficit of from 120 to 140 millions. He was quite right in assuming that those 56 millions might be covered by economy in the expenditure; but it was both irritating and untrue, when he, on this ground, denied the necessity of summoning the States-general, and called their convocation a free act of royal favour. He did not speak of the real malady which was eating out the heart of the state, because he himself had been the principal cause of it, and yet did not wish to lose his reputation as a financial saviour. The balance of income and expenditure might, indeed, easily be restored in the future, but the deficit of former years had been heedlessly allowed to accumulate, and by no one more than by Necker himself. A floating debt of 550 millions had to be faced[1]—in other words, therefore, more than a whole year's income had been expended in advance. The position was a worse one than if the French budget at the present day had to bear more than two thousand millions, instead of six hundred millions, of floating debt.

Of this amount 71 millions of anticipated revenue, and 72 millions already due to the public creditors, had to be paid, according to contract, in the year 1789.[2] The real deficit of the year, therefore, at the lowest calculation, amounted to more than 200 millions, or nearly half the annual income; which was equivalent to a falling-off of 600 millions in the income of the year at the present day.

These facts then were concealed, and thus the ministry was necessarily placed in a false position towards the States-general; the continuance of the former abuses was perpetuated, or a violent catastrophe made inevitable. It was a fatal example by which dishonesty and confusion were established for a whole age in this focus of political life.

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[1] Anticipations . . . . 271½ mill.
Arrears of interest . . . 160 „
Arrears of the ministries 120 „
551½ mill.

[2] These are the *remboursemens* of which Calonne speaks.

For the moment the matter was not discussed. Every thing yielded to the importance of the constitutional question —whether the three orders should deliberate in common or apart—whether there should be one single representative body or independent corporations. This point was mooted at once in its full extent on the question, whether the validity of the elections should be scrutinised by each order separately, or by the whole Assembly.

We need not here enter into the question of right; but of this there can be no doubt, that the government, which virtually created the States-general afresh, had the formal right to convoke them either in one way or the other, as it thought fit. The government desired reforms, partly in accordance with the political system of the principal minister, and partly because they wanted money, and no money was to be had without reforms. They infinitely lowered their own influence and dignity by leaving a most important constitutional question to the decision and the wrangling of the three orders; and they frustrated their own practical objects, by not decidedly declaring for the union of the orders in one Assembly. Every important measure of reform, which had in view the improvement of the material and financial condition of the country, would have been mutilated by the clergy and rejected by the nobles. This was sufficiently proved by the *cahiers*[1] of the electors.

The States themselves had to undertake what the government had neglected. That which the government might have freely and legally commanded, now led to violent revolution. But there was no choice left; the commons would not tolerate the continuance of the privileged orders; and the state could not tolerate them if it did not wish to perish.

The commons, who on this point were unanimous, considered the system of a single Assembly as a matter of course.

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[1] The written instructions given by the electors to the deputies.

They took care not to constitute themselves as *tiers état*, but remained passive, and declared that they would wait until the Assembly should be constituted as a whole. Thus slowly and cautiously did they enter on their career; they felt conscious of the goodness of their cause, but in all other respects their views were vague and unsettled. The deputies were strangers to one another, the scene of meeting was new to the majority, and very few of them were of a character to form any fixed plan of action. They knew the wishes of their constituents, *i. e.* of nearly all the grown-up men in the kingdom; they were conscious of the ferment in the public mind, and well aware by what a vast amount of enthusiasm and despair they were backed. Some of the leading men had already established themselves in the confidence of the alleys and corners of the capital, and had succeeded in some attempts to raise a riot, and thereby satisfied themselves of the possibility of armed resistance.

But the great mass of the deputies were uncertain as to the scope of their own plans, and grew embarrassed themselves, when they saw the embarrassment of the government.[1] Should the King, contrary to expectation change his policy, there were very few who would be able to free themselves from their accustomed reverence for the monarch, and their idea of the overwhelming power of the government.[2] It needed many errors on the part of the monarchy to increase their confidence in themselves. Indisputably the most important and influential among them was Count Mirabeau, the

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[1] The statements of Bailly, Mirabeau, and Barentin, all agree in this point. — [2] Sieyès expresses a hope, at this time, that the Assembly, might pave the way, and that the next generation might abolish the nobility. Beaulieu, *Essais*, I. 139. Robespierre suspected Mounier, Malonet, and Target; had little confidence in Mirabeau, and consoled himself with the thought that there were 100 patriots in the Assembly ready to die for their country. (*Unpublished Letters of Robespierre*, quoted by Louis Blanc, B. I. ch. 8.)

representative of the town of Aix in Provence, a violent opponent of feudalism, and a restless participator in all the recent popular commotions. He would have been better able than any man to stimulate the Assembly to vigorous action; but even he hesitated, and kept back his associates from taking any violent steps, because he feared that the inconsistency and inexperience of the majority would bring ruin on the state. "If Necker," he wrote at that time, "had a spark of energy and talent, he might impose an additional tax of 60 millions, and contract a loan for 150 millions, in eight days, and dissolve us on the ninth; if the King had tact enough to place himself at our head, instead of betraying wishes at variance with ours, the Assembly would be ready to enact the second part of the Danish revolution of 1660." It was only very gradually that the *tiers état* began to negotiate with the other orders.

The nobles shewed themselves haughty, dogmatical, and aggressive; and the clergy cautious, unctuous, and tenacious. They tried the efficacy of general conferences; but as no progress was found to have been made after three weeks, they gave up their consultations on the 25th of May. The impatience of the public, and the necessities of the treasury, continually increased; the government, therefore, once more intervened, and Necker was called upon to propose a compromise; according to which, the scrutiny of the election was to be carried on by each order separately, and the result communicated to the other two orders; and, in case of controversy, the dispute was to be decided by the council of ministers. But little would have been gained by this plan, because the main question, respecting the mode of voting, would remain unsettled. The clergy, therefore, accepted the proposal without hesitation; but the nobles, rendered more unbending and exacting by contact with one another, declared that they had long ago finished their scrutiny, and constituted themselves as a separate order. They thus spared the commons the dreaded honour of being the first to break with

the crown. The conferences were again closed on the 9th of June.

The leaders of the commons now saw that they must either succumb to the nobility, or force the other orders to submission. On the 10th Mirabeau announced that the Abbé Sieyès, the deputy for Paris, had an important motion to bring forward. This was a declaration that the time was come to constitute the Assembly,—to summon the other orders to a common scrutiny of the elections,—to commence proceedings without delay,—and to take no notice of those who remained away. The motion was carried, and reported to the King; the scrutiny was begun on the evening of the 12th and finished on the 14th. The all-important question now approached its solution; the Assembly was in a position to constitute itself, but in what character? Two classes of opinion, which were to come into collision throughout the whole course of the Revolution, now stood opposed to each other on its very threshhold; each represented by the most powerful organ it possessed in France.

On the one side rose Sieyès, a theoretical politician of little knowledge of real life, who judged the world and mankind solely according to his own system, pursued his course with logical consistency but with one-sided narrowness of mind, and like all such theorists, was filled with secret pride and ambition. His whole speech turned upon these simple propositions: —

"We are, as may be shown by our commissions, representatives of 96 per cent. of the whole nation; the people is sovereign, we, therefore, as its representatives, must regard and constitute ourselves as a National Representation." This was in fact a declaration of open war between arbitrary principles and existing rights. According to these principles, it is agreeable to reason that the majority should rule; but what is not reasonable must no longer exist; if the King and the higher classes remain unreasonable, the sovereign people must pass them by unheeded.

Mirabeau, on the other hand, wished indeed to introduce, at any cost, a new form of government, and to abolish the old feudal state; but he was a friend of order, as well as a deadly enemy of the old state of things. He was resolved even upon revolution, if that were unavoidable, but he endeavoured with unceasing anxiety to break the violence of the shock. In his restlessly creative mind was reflected the image of a beneficent activity, which, if order could be maintained, might extend itself without limit in every direction; but he saw, with equal clearness, the fearful ruin, which must accompany the destruction of order. He had recently sought out Necker, who was in his eyes a contemptible statesman, and offered him his cooperation, if he would follow the proper course. But Necker, who despised the immorality of Mirabeau's private life, and feared a dangerous rivalry from his brilliant talents, drily rejected his advances. Mirabeau, however, did not allow himself to be diverted from his course by his indignation at this treatment; and being convinced that a violent step was not to be avoided, he endeavoured at least to prevent the power of the majority from being declared the standard of right. "The people," he cried, "is as yet nothing, but it will become great and majestic; we are still subject to laws sanctioned by the King, and we cannot dispense with his approval of our measures; we must, for the present, content ourselves with the rights which we actually possess, but we may set up an irresistible claim on the future. Call yourselves therefore representatives of the people in the National Assembly, procure for the people access to its rights, and then march on to power in alliance with the people."

There were but few persons in the Assembly to whom even Mirabeau's views seemed to go too far; but even these, while they proposed to adopt the name of representatives of the majority, proceeded as if the unity of the Assembly were a necessary and settled thing. On this point there was no doubt, and no divergence of opinion. Outside of

the Assembly the ferment was continually on the increase. In Paris the bold orators set up their rostra in the gardens of the Palais Royal, and kept the crowds which thronged to hear them in a state of perpetual excitement. In the provinces the famine grew worse, and led to the formation of numerous bands of peasant farmers and agricultural labourers, who, seeing no prospect of improvement in any direction, levied black mail, first upon the richer farmers, then upon the castles of the landowners, and lastly upon the small towns. The troops were thereby kept in perpetual movement, and could after all effect but little. In Marseilles the city magistrates, by Mirabeau's advice, called upon the citizens to take up arms to keep such bandits from their city. The youth of Bretagne, who, over a great extent of country had remained under arms from the time of the election—to the number, as was said of 40,000—swore to support the commons, if the aristocracy should throw obstacles in their way. Intelligence of similar manifestations of feeling were brought to Versailles from every quarter; the opinion prevailed in Paris, that the court was guilty of treachery, and the commons of tardiness in their movements.

Every hour the Assembly was urged more and more irresistibly towards extreme measures, and the court had every reason to fear that the union of the three orders would raise the National Assembly to absolute power, even over the crown. In addition to this the ministry found themselves harassed by cares of a very substantial nature; six weeks had already passed since the meeting of the Assembly, without any measures having been taken to replenish the public coffers, now almost utterly exhausted. The Count d'Artois and his friends were continually harping upon the rapid fulfilment of their gloomy prophecies, and declared that it was high time to secure the royal power from the hourly increasing danger. In the midst of these excited feelings the transactions of the commons were concluded, of which Sieyès gave a short summary on the 16th of June.

The courage of many of the deputies had increased, and others were angry at the increasing leaning of the council of ministers to the side of the nobility. With a majority little short of unanimity, and amidst the applause of four thousand spectators, Sieyès carried his point on the 17th, when the commons constituted themselves as the National Assembly.

This was indeed a resolution which demanded the most serious consideration of the government; for it comprehended, not merely the union of the three orders into one Assembly, but the declaration that the representatives of the majority were raised above all existing rights to the position of absolute rulers of France. It made a great difference whether they attained this object in consequence of an understanding between all the parties interested, and with the sanction of the King, or arbitrarily assumed to themselves, and perhaps to themselves alone, the sole legislative power in France. It was, indeed, a usurpation if, ever there was one; it was, as one of the deputies for Paris—the great naturalist, Bailly—himself said, the transference of the royal power to the Assembly;—it was the Revolution! The moderate men in the Assembly could fairly lay the responsibility on the ministers, who had left them no choice between illegality and political death. For the government, which, by its indecision and inactivity, had involuntarily joined the ranks of the higher classes, this event was a crushing blow.

For many days past the collision had been generally foreseen. The nobility actively bestirred themselves, and violently urged the King to stand his ground and uphold their rights. A portion of the ministry, not generally favourable to the nobles, now thought themselves obliged to act in concert with them, in order to protect the independence of the crown. Consultation after consultation was held without much progress being made, for the ministry were by no means unaware of the difficulties of their position, and, worst of all, they were not agreed among themselves. The most zealous

opposition came from Necker, who, in concert with a portion of the nobility, and some members of the commons, had long cherished the wish to introduce a constitution similar to that of England, and to unite the dignified clergy and the nobility into an upper house. The democratic system of the Abbé Sieyès afforded as little hope of carrying out this idea, as the obstinate spirit of separation in the two higher orders. In the present state of things, therefore, Necker saw no prospect of success in any direction; but he dreaded most of all the loss of his popularity, which would have entirely destroyed his influence with the commons—and this loss would certainly befall him, if he took any decided part with the nobility. At last, therefore, he eagerly recommended the measure—which he ought to have carried five months before, as the very foundation of his whole policy,—viz. the interference of the King in favor of the right system. The King, he said, in virtue of his prerogative, ought to command the union of the orders, but in other respects to maintain his former sovereignty intact.

But it was now too late. The attack of the commons touched the possessors of rights and privileges in their tenderest point, and roused them to resistance. The council of ministers resolved to grant every other conceivable reform, but to insist on the separation of the orders. It was not merely the influence of the Queen, as has been said, but zeal against the Revolution, which brought about this determination.[1]

The terror and abhorrence of the King's servants must have been blind indeed, which could induce them to take such a step as this. The Assembly had been called together to afford the King's government a powerful support against the selfwill of the aristocratic corporations. And now the King was placed in the breach to defend the nobility! By annulling the resolution of the commons, the wrath of the nation

[1] Memoirs of the minister Barentin.

was directed against the King, and to appease this anger an essential part of the royal power was to be sacrificed—an inevitable consequence of every reform, if there were to be any States-general at all.

Necker's proposal would have done but little to preserve the royal authority, but the ministry had brought this misfortune upon themselves, and should have been glad to make a tolerable escape from their embarrassment. The affair was really decided by the fact that the ministers only possessed the power of carrying out their resolution as long as they met with no resistance. The coffers of the state were empty, and the troops in Paris utterly untrustworthy. This was well known to the ministers, yet they went blindly on in the same course. Louis XVI. went hunting, and the courtiers were delighted that the mouths of the talkers and the demagogues were about to be stopped.

The first step, however, in the new direction proved to the ministers what a resistance might be expected. When the hall of Assembly was closed on the 20th, to make preparations for a royal sitting, the leaders of the *tiers état* assembled the majority of their followers in the neighbouring tennis-court. The feelings of the deputies were variously agitated; but the majority were by no means at first in such a state of enthusiasm as has been generally described.[1] They did not all know how much the royal power had been undermined, and most of them were by no means at ease during this commencement of the contest against the grandson of Louis XIV. A few of the more zealous cried out that they ought to remove to Paris, where the people would welcome them with enthusiastic joy.

The excitement in the capital had indeed risen to the

[1] Granier de Cassagnac has brought forward contemporaneous and incontrovertible evidence on this point: *Histoire des Causes, &c.* III. 63; and Louis Blanc agrees with him, B. I. ch. 8.

highest pitch; the great mass of the people was in a state of wild agitation, and the soldiers, who were entertained by hundreds every day in the Palais Royal, were completely demoralized.[1] The moderate party in the Assembly were terrified at the prospect of the catastrophe which their appearance in the streets of Paris would precipitate; and Mounier, deputy of Provence, emphatically declared that they ought to remain where they were, and not separate until the constitution of the kingdom, and the new birth of public order, was completed. He proposed that they should confirm this resolution by a solemn oath. His words ran like wild-fire through the Assembly. They remembered that they should have the aid of a zealous minority among the nobles, an overwhelming number of the clergy, and the silent but active cooperation of the leading minister.

Mounted on a table, Bailly read out the form of oath, and claimed for himself the honour of being the first to swear. The enthusiasm then became general, and amidst loud and reiterated applauses the deputies repeated the oath, with which the pulsation of a new era was to begin for France—an oath, by which most of them devoted their own heads as a sacrifice for freedom and country.

Two days afterwards 148 of the clergy—bishops, abbots, and parish priests—and the whole of the nobility of Dauphiné, came to share the perils of the commons. The ministers did nothing to prevent this step, nor did it lead them to modify their own intentions.

On the 23rd the King was conducted into the hall, with great state, to make known for the last time his royal pleasure. What he then said would have buried the monarchy in France and transferred the sovereign power to the States-general. The department of finance was put entirely into their hands; and the King declared himself ready to abolish the most oppressive taxes, to reform the army and the courts

[1] "They have all become philosophers," wrote Camille Desmoulins.

of law, to institute provincial assemblies and to do away with *lettres de cachet* and the censorship of the press. All these matters were to to be decided and regulated by the States-general—and this was in itself a great concession—but it must be done, he said, by the three orders in separate consultation. This prohibition of the National Assembly was the beginning and end of the royal sitting; it was the abdication of the monarchy in favour of the nobility; it was the handing over France to the arbitrary will of the privileged classes.

In too many histories of this period this all-important point has been overlooked; and yet it is by this alone that we can judge of the value of those promises of the King, which, under the system of three orders, would have been nothing more than promises.

It was no wonder that the commons resisted. After the King had withdrawn, the master of the ceremonies, Marquis Brézé, called upon the deputies to separate, and was answered by Mirabeau with quiet firmness: "If," said he, "you have orders to remove us from this hall, you must also get authority to use force, for we shall yield to nothing but bayonets."[1] The Assembly, on his motion, then decreed the inviolability of the deputies. This was enough to destroy the whole effect of the royal sitting.

The King was the first to shrink from violence. "They will not leave the hall?" said he, "well then, let them alone." Necker then began to stir again; he had not been present at the sitting but had given in his resignation. In the evening he received the acclamations of innumerable crowds, who had just before followed the King with murmurs and abuse, and he thereupon allowed himself to be persuaded by Louis to remain in office. The chiefs of the commons were assembled for hours in his house, and on the 24th he

[1] Mirabeau, *Lettres à ses Commettans*. The manifold variations of his celebrated words are none of them authentic.

thanked the Assembly—which was sitting as if nothing had happened—for the marks of respect he had received. Another section of the clergy, and on the following day the liberal minority of the nobility, friends of Necker, joined the commons. By this time the whole of Paris was in an uproar; the excitement was great and universal, and it was now not only the literary hacks and the women of the Palais Royal, with the fickle crowd who gathered round them, but the citizen electors of the tiers état, men of property and character, who came forward to promise the Assembly their support. The revolt began as early as the 25th, when a mob stormed the palace of the archbishop, and the guards refused to fire upon them. In Versailles a similar crowd of people endeavoured to drive the troops from the entrance of the hall of deputies, and the officers could not rely upon their men. The ministers were disheartened by the desertion of Necker, and the King by that of his troops. Louis sent for the Duke of Luxembourg, the president of the nobility, and ordered him to affect a union with the commons. "I have no money," he said, "and the army is full of mutiny; I cannot protect you, for even my own life is in danger." "To do that," cried the duke in astonishment and terror, "is, in the present state of public opinion, to proclaim the omnipotence of the States-general; the nobles are ready to die for their King." "I do not wish," replied Louis, "that any man should lose his life for me."

Utterly defeated as they were, the feudal party had no intention of falling by their own weakness, or without resistance. The union of the three orders was nevertheless effected, and the clergy meritoriously offered to pay taxes for the future, and to give their property as security for the national debt. Then followed all manner of reservations, protests, and conscientious scruples; and the mutual bitterness continued undiminished. Still worse, however, was the continuance of the anarchy which had broken out in Paris.

None of the authorities could command obedience; the

troops became more and more insubordinate, and vagabonds from all quarters poured into the city, to the number, according to some reports, of 12,000, and, according to others, of 30,000 or even 40,000. The people were starving and the price of bread rose to four sous and upwards; the bakers shops were almost daily attacked, and there was no longer the slightest protection for person or property. In such a state of things, the ministers were quite right in endeavouring to recover their material power by summoning fresh regiments to the capital from the different provinces. But the aristocratic party immediately endeavoured to use this force for their own purposes. The attempt of the 23rd had failed, they said, because the guards had refused obedience, and Necker had left his colleagues in the lurch. How would it be if they were to form a ministry of new and stronger materials, and place at its disposal an imposing force, which had not yet been tampered with by the demagogues? Such a ministry would have the means of making the braggadocios of the Assembly feel the power of the crown—of securing the fair rights of the nobility, and thereby protecting real liberty from anarchy.

The course of events remained unchanged. The number of troops in Paris increased every day, and the chief command of them was given to Marshal Broglie, the veteran hero of the seven years' war, who, as the court believed, could not fail to win the favour and obedience of the soldiers. This illusion would soon have been dispelled, had the court party been capable of learning from experience. On the 30th, the colonel of the French guards arrested eleven of his men for combining with the Palais Royal to form a club in their regiment, to seduce the soldiers from their duty. Several clubs of this kind had been formed by Parisian agents in towns and garrisons of the provinces, and they were all connected with the Palais Royal.

The leaders of the central club in this place resolved to rescue the eleven soldiers, that they might not be themselves

involved in the investigation of their offence. A crowd of some thousand persons broke open the prison and liberated the triumphant guardsmen, and a column of dragoons which was sent to restore order joined the people. It soon became known in Versailles that the King's body-guard was not at all more trustworthy: a regiment of the line at Bethune refused to put down a bread riot, and the grateful citizens awarded an increase of pay to the mutinous troops.

Broglie knew of no other way of meeting the difficulty than sending for more and more regiments; the only consequence of which was that the army became more and more demoralised by contact with the Parisians.[1] In this state of things Mirabeau once more made himself heard in the National Assembly; he was not one of the regular leaders of the democracy—who were endeavouring at that time to alienate the soldiers from the throne—but he was always sufficiently mixed up with them, to know the extent of their success, and was firmly resolved to accept even the most terrible evils of Revolution, if these proved absolutely necessary to the overthrow of feudalism; yet the urgent petition which he proposed to present to the King to remove the troops from Paris, did not proceed from a wish to weaken the control over Parisian anarchy, but partly from the desire to free the Assembly from the very appearance of danger, and still more from the conviction, that any violent step would immediately break up the army and spread anarchy over the whole of France. He coupled with his petition a proposal to form a citizen guard in Paris, by which he hoped

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[1] *Journal and Correspondence of Lord Auckland*, II. 326: — "What has certainly contributed to this quick and wonderful revolution is the defection of those troops who were depended upon, and applied to, to support coercive measures, and a more than probability that the whole army is ready to do the same. The most serious informations on this head are daily coming to the Ministers from the provinces." — Thus writes, on the 5th of July, a diplomatist in daily communication with Necker.

to gain at the same time a weapon against the *ancien régime* and a guarantee for the new order of things. But neither the King—who had no conception of the disordered state of affairs—nor the Assembly—which was terrified and exasperated by the machinations of the nobility—would agree to his proposal.

On the 11th of July the feudal party executed their *coup d'état*. Necker and three other ministers were dismissed, and Breteuil, Broglie, Foulon and Laporte succeeded them in the royal council.

These men were not exactly the chiefs of the party, but they were staunch royalists, and the immediate task proposed to them was to overawe the Assembly at Versailles, and the demagogues in Paris. Such was the unnatural complication of things, however, that the fruits of their victory would have been gathered, not by the crown, but by the nobles. This fact was generally understood, and all the old hatred against the privileged classes was directed against the new ministry.

On the day before, a gigantic banquet had been held in the Palais Royal, where a motley crowd of guardsmen, cavalry of all arms, artillery men, and troops of the line were entertained by the citizens.

Late in the night of the 11th the electors of the tiers état discussed the proposal of Mirabeau, and the formation of a National guard. On the 12th at mid-day the news of Necker's dismissal arrived; a riot immediately broke out in the Palais Royal and Camille Desmoulins incited the people to resistance from the windows of the Café Foy. The populace had been so well prepared that the effect of his address was tremendous.

Many thousands of courageous men of all classes, labourers and students, merchants and apprentices, and, it must be confessed, beggars, vagabonds and thieves, were collected and set in motion.

The gunsmiths' shops were plundered in all parts of the city; small detachments on guard were dispersed, the custom-

houses at the *barrières* set on fire, and the charges of cavalry, which prince Lambese ordered to be made in the gardens of the Tuileries, were repulsed. The defeat of the ministry was decided in the first few minutes; for all the troops, except a few foreign companies, refused to act, so that it became necessary to order them to evacuate the city before dark, and to bivouac on the Champ de Mars.[1] The 13th was an unhappy day, both for the court, which received the news of the defection of the soldiers,[2] and for all who possessed property in Paris. The latter saw themselves threatened, on the one side, by the army on the Champ de Mars, and on the other, by the ever-increasing masses of the revolutionists. The latter danger was the more urgent of the two, for the mob plundered, not only the gunsmiths shops, but the corn magazines and even the bakers shops. They soon proceeded to the wine-cellars, and at last intelligence was brought from all quarters of thefts of every kind committed in the name of freedom. The formation of a National guard was now hailed with grateful joy, as the only means of safety.[3]

The first patrols made their appearance on the night of the 12th of July; and on the morning of the 13th the electors took possession of the Hôtel de Ville, appointed a permanent committee, which undertook the government of the city, armed two hundred men from each of the sixty districts, and passed a resolution to increase this force fourfold.

A portion of the hitherto undisciplined gangs immediately

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[1] Poisson, *L'Armée et la Garde-Nationale*, I. 32, has overlooked the reports of the contemporaneous press concerning the defection of the troops, and attributes their marching out of the city to an earlier order of the King, which, according to the positive statements of Besenval (*Mémoire*, III. 300) is quite impossible. — [2] Even the foreign regiments Royal-Allemand and Chateau Vieux renounced their obedience. — *Revol. de Paris.* — [3] Louis Blanc attributes this to the "suspicion" of the "*bourgeoisie*" against "the calumniated people." He seems to know nothing of the above-mentioned disturbances.

took service in the National guard, whose principal task was to disarm the bands of a similar kind. The tumult, however, was continually increasing; the whole regiment of the French guards went over to the people; and numerous deserters, belonging to other divisions of the army, were continually arriving in Paris,[1] and proved to be by far the most difficult to control. It was then proposed to plunder all the houses of the aristocracy; the monastery of the Lazarites was devastated, the collection of weapons in the Crown treasury carried off, and a number of prisons for debtors broken open.

"This was the 13th of July," says Bailly, "the day on which Paris was in constant danger of being plundered, and only saved from the bandits by the National guard."[2]

The same day decided the fate of the monarchy. General Besenval, who commanded the troops in the Champ de Mars, did not venture to move his demoralized batallions, and after vainly sending messenger after messenger to Versailles, at last decided, on the 14th, to withdraw from the dangerous neighbourhood of the capital.[3]

The overthrow of the aristocratic party and the ancient monarchy, and the breaking up of the old military system, had now become a certainty. The existing régime had a second time fallen without a blow, in consequence of its own internal disorders, and the defection of its own regiments on

[1] In the *Correspondence of Lord Auckland*, II. 330, the correspondent says that a regiment of the Swiss guards, a regiment of dragoons, and two regiments of infantry had gone over to the people. Loustalot speaks of 3000 men. — [2] *Mém.* I. 113, 115. (Edit. 1804). — [3] When Lafayette, II. 22, says that the arrival of a squadron of hussars on the 14th would have renewed the alarm, and given rise to a Bastille combat (the *Moniteur* also speaks of these hussars), he gives, II. 53, the true standard for the right estimation of the following; — "The sudden institution of national guards was certainly not caused, but at most accelerated, by the reports concerning the bandits; just as the report of the arrival of hussars hurried on the *émeute* in Paris." Conf. Bailly, I. 139. It was a false alarm, such as were spread by thousands every day.

the 13th of July. The occurrences of the 14th already belonged to a new epoch and a new struggle.

The popular movement in Paris continued in its course unchecked. The vast city, from one end to the other, was in the hands of the insurgents. Every passion of the human heart, patriotism and love of freedom, hatred and revenge, avarice and ambition, were fermenting in the heaving mass of human beings. The wildest reports were continually spread of the approach of hostile armies, the dispersion of the National Assembly, the bloodthirsty fury of the aristocrats; and these gave rise to threatening and quixotic schemes on the part of the revolutionists—such as putting all the enemies of the people under the ban, marching to Versailles, and liberating the King from his evil counsellors.

The electors at the Hôtel de Ville wished to pause in their course, and in the first place put themselves in communication with the National Assembly; but in the streets the tumultuous cry was incessantly raised, that the people must not rest till the King had dismissed his ministry, but fight to the last drop of blood; and that, above all things, arms must be placed in the hands of the masses.

One mob, led by the procureur Corny and the priest of the church of St. Stephen,[1] attacked the Palais des Invalides, where twenty cannon and twenty-eight thousand muskets were captured. Another band of rioters from the Faubourg St. Antoine commenced an attack on the Bastille, where they also expected to find a large supply of arms. This fortress was in ill repute as a receptacle for persons arbitrarily imprisoned, especially for state prisoners of high rank, who had fallen victims to court cabals or the caprice of the sovereign. With its massive walls, ten feet thick, and its eight gloomy towers, it was situated at the very entrance of Paris proper, and commanded with its guns, which peeped from the bat-

[1] A great friend and admirer of Lafayette. (Compare his doings after the 22nd of July, Lafayette, II.)

tlements, the habitations of the artisans and day-labourers of the Faubourg St. Antoine. It was a living monument of the arbitrary despotism of the *ancien régime*, and a mighty dam in the stream of the Parisian Revolution. The popular love of freedom, and wise calculation on the part of the demagogues, united in the cry of "Down with the Bastille!" which soon resounded through the whole of Paris. In spite of its moats, walls, and guns, the storming of the fortress was no difficult task; its garrison of 138 men, of whom a third were *invalides*,[1] had only two sacks of flour, and could not hinder the cutting off of their water; and no aid could possibly be given them. Innumerable masses of armed men poured from the Faubourg towards the principal entrance, and several companies of the revolutionary regiments, with the French guards at their head, marched from Paris in the same direction.

Yet the commandant, De Launay, refused to surrender. The contest began, and after some of the citizens, with desperate boldness, had cut through the chains of the draw-bridge, the first court of the fortress was taken; but in the attack upon the second court the assailants, to their infinite wrath, met with a bloody repulse. The courage of the garrison however was now exhausted, and the *invalides* wished to capitulate.

De Launay, prevented by his officers from blowing himself and the fortress into the air, let down the second bridge on a promise of an undisturbed retreat, and the victorious crowd, some with enthusiastic cries of liberty, and others thirsting for blood and murder, poured into the ancient building. The lives of the garrison were immediately threatened; the common soldiers were with great difficulty rescued by the French guards, but De Launay and his officers, in spite of the heroic resistance of the popular leaders, who endeavoured to protect them, were cut down, and their heads carried about

[1] According to other accounts, 82 *invalides*, and 32 Swiss.

in triumph. Immediately afterwards, another victim fell in the Hôtel de Ville, viz. Flesselles, president of the committee of electors, who was suspected by the people of throwing obstacles in the way of arming the revolutionists, and of promising assistance to De Launay.[1]

The only thing which the temporary magistracy of the city could do for the protection of the person, was to issue an order that the houses should be illuminated during the night. In all other respects, they allowed the popular stream to flow unchecked to every quarter of the town. Reports followed one another in quick succession, that the troops were marching from Versailles against Paris—that the liberal deputies had been seized—and orders given to bombard the town. The principal streets were soon covered with barricades; redoubts were thrown up in the squares and furnished with artillery; armed men and women marched through the streets with mingled threats and shouts of joy. On the 16th they declared that if the King did not come to Paris, 80,000 of the National guard would go to Versailles, and fetch him, and scatter the swarm of aristocrats to the four quarters of the world.

These violent measures were no longer necessary. As early as the 15th, the King appeared in the National Assembly, accompanied by his brothers, to announce the withdrawal of the troops, and the recall of Necker; and to beg the Chamber to act as mediators between himself and Paris. On the 16th, a deputation from the Assembly repaired to Paris, and found the streets still full of barricades, and the agents of the Duke of Orleans busily employed in preparing the march upon Versailles; but the intelligence which they brought was received in the Hôtel de Ville with unbounded joy. In the midst of this enthusiasm, Bailly, who presided over the commons in the tennis-court, was elected mayor of Paris,

[1] That it was not proved is shown by Louis Blanc's close investigation of the subject, Book I. 11.

and Lafayette commander-in-chief of the National guard, by general acclamation. Neither of these men would hear of the Duke of Orleans being made King, or even regent; and they resolved that Louis XVI. should make a public appearance in Paris, and by this act of resignation cut off all hopes of a change in the person of the monarch. During the night the ministers, the generals who had conducted the late military operations, the Princes of Artois and Condé, fled from the country, and on the 17th, the King made ready for his dangerous journey to the capital, after making his will, and receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. His progress, however, was a successful one. Under the protection of Bailly, and other popular deputies, the King proceeded in an hour and a half from the *barrières* to the Hôtel de Ville, under the windows of which hundreds of thousands filled the *Place* and the streets. The King was not able to address the people himself, but Bailly and Lolly-Tolendal spoke for him, and their words called forth innumerable *vivats* from the crowd. No further mention was made of Philip of Orleans.

The King had succumbed, and the government had passed into the hands of the National Assembly. But whether the word government, at this period, had any meaning was what no man knew; for like a spark in a train of gunpowder, the revolt in Paris had produced a general explosion through the whole of France, by which in a few days, the old political system was destroyed for ever. In all the provinces, without one exception, the Estates, the local magistrates, the civic corporations, the peasants and the proletaries rose in arms. In Bretagne, where for months past every preparation had been made for the Revolution, the towns appointed new municipalities, and armed a civic guard from the royal magazines. In Caen the people stormed the citadel, destroyed the offices of the salt-tax, and would have slain the collectors, but for the intervention of the civic guard. In Rouen, Vernon, and Nevers, several independent municipalities—nay even

different bodies of civic guards—were formed side by side in the heat of party spirit, and regarded one another with jealous hostility.

Generally speaking, the civic guards were equipped throughout the whole of France in the space of eight days, with such weapons as lay nearest at hand—guns, pikes, daggers and sabres. These irregularly armed forces were sufficient to keep the more desperate rioters in check, and were not needed for greater enterprises; since not a single regiment in the whole kingdom would have marched out against them. The royal intendants were nowhere to be seen; the parliaments wished to be altogether forgotten, and the old courts of law vanished without leaving a trace. The necessity of rendering life and property secure gave rise to the establishment of permanent committees in all other places, as well as Paris. These were seldom appointed by a regular election, but generally by acclamation, or even by an arbitrary assumption of power. These bodies, supported by the civic guard, maintained a tolerable degree of order in most of the towns; at any rate, they prevented murder and robbery. But there was no hope of protection for anything which belonged to the *ancien régime*. The custom-houses at the gates of the towns, as well as on the frontiers of the kingdom, were almost all demolished; unpopular civil and military officers were hunted down, and put to death; and in some places, as St. Denis, Poissy, St. Germain, the so-called corn usurers were hung.

An unhappy man of this sort at Poissy, who, as it turned out afterwards, generously supported 40 workmen, was with difficulty saved from the hands of a furious mob by the humblest prayers of a deputation from the National Assembly. The terrible rise in prices brought the question of bread into fearful prominence. The peasants were afraid of taking their corn into the riotous towns, where they ran a chance of being robbed; and the city authorities, fearing for their lives, sent out secret agents to buy corn at any price. These per-

sons often bid one against another, and thus raised the prices still higher; and when they excited the attention of the villagers, they were stopped, and sometimes put to death as corn usurers.

In short, confusion, excitement, and ever-increasing tumult prevailed in every quarter.

But this state of things was mild and tolerable when compared with the condition of the rural districts. It was here that feudalism had been most oppressive, and had acted most directly and most injuriously upon individuals; and il was here therefore that, as soon as the weight of the ruling power was withdrawn, the outbreak was horrible beyond all description.[1]

In the north of France, where the greatest part of the land was cultivated by wealthy farmers, and well-paid and well-treated labourers, the people contented themselves with suddenly refusing all services, tithes and socage.

This was bad enough; for first the farmers, and then the land-owners, were thus deprived of all their property. In other parts of the north, the peasants broke into the estates which the land-owners had reserved for their own management, and settled themselves comfortably down, in full possession.

Here, however, the lives and dwellings of the owners were respected; but in the centre and south of the kingdom—in the districts where the system of *métairies* prevailed, with all its miseries—the exasperation and brutality of the peasants were unbounded.

In Auvergne and Dauphiné, they first banded themselves together in the mountains, and then, with arms in their hands, rushed down like a roaring torrent upon the plains and valleys. The castles were burned to the ground, the monasteries were pillaged and destroyed, and the nobles, whenever they were caught, were put to death with horrible

[1] Valuable details in Buchez, IV. 1.

tortures. In Franche-Comté a noble castle was burned every day, to the very end of the month; and when the civic guard of Vesoul endeavoured to check these proceedings, it was defeated by the peasants, and the town itself was stormed.

In Maçonnais, not far from Vesoul, banditti to the number of six thousand collected together, set fire to the houses of those peasants who would not join them, cut down 230 of them,[1] and in a fortnight burned 72 castles. It was not until the 29th that they were defeated, in a regular battle, by the united civic guards of all the neighbouring towns. The waves of an unbridled and bloodthirsty anarchy flowed wildly over the kingdom!

Such was the result which was brought about in a few weeks, by the senseless attempt to maintain, by open force, a system which had reduced the state to bankruptcy, and the people to destitution. The sword, which was intended to lop off the natural growth of the nation, had shivered at the first blow. Magistrates and troops had vanished from the surface of the country; there was no law, no authority, no court of justice; and society was dissolved into its natural elements.

The National Assembly has often been reproached with having laid its innovating hands on every thing;—with having paid no respect to existing interests, and made no gradual transition from the old to the new. Where they have deserved this reproach, we shall not palliate their error, but in the majority of cases the reproach belongs rather to those who opposed them in the first few days of their existence. What had the storm which was raised by Breteuil's ministry left of the old system which could be slowly improved, and, by improving, permanently maintained?

Mirabeau was once more right, when, on the 17th of July, he opposed a well-meant motion of Lally-Tollendal—

[1] Report to the Assemblée Nationale, March 22, 91.

that the people should be admonished by an energetic proclamation to return to order and legality, now that they had gained their freedom—by saying, that it was not a question of admonitions, but of new and legally constituted authorities. The municipalities, he said, ought to be re-established as soon as possible; and with this view, the Assembly ought to lay down a few short rules for their guidance, and leave particulars to the discretion of the different towns themselves,—only ordering that the election should take place immediately.

The controversy which arose on this subject prevented anything from being done. Paris, more especially, sank every day more deeply into anarchy. The competence of the electors, who had at first taken the lead in upholding order, was disputed by the local authorities of the city districts, and the rioters were once more free from all control. Five times in five days were victims of popular justice saved with difficulty by the insinuating popularity of Lafayette; and at last, on the 22nd, in spite of all his efforts, Foulon the minister and his sonin-law Berthier were murdered with circumstances of horrible barbarity.

This crime was not the result of an outbreak of popular fury; it had cost the revolutionary leaders large sums of money,[1] for which thousands of assassins were to be had. This event had a most powerful effect on the National Assembly and the party of order in Paris. The electors resigned their office, and 180 representatives chosen by the districts formed a new municipality, which forthwith set to work to suppress disorders in every direction. The Na-

[1] In Mirabeau's correspondence the following statement occurs; Foulon's death cost hundreds of thousands of francs, the murder of the baker François only a few thousands. Bailly also takes the same view, II. 293. Six hundred men rode to meet Berthier, in order to frustrate the endeavours of his escort to bring him straight into the Abbey. *Conf.* Croker's *Essays.* p. 70.

tional Assembly now issued a proclamation to the provinces, but, as Mirabeau had foretold, without any result whatever. Reports were continually arriving of the burning of castles, of cruel outrages on the nobles, of the desecration of churches in which unpopular priests had taken refuge, and the plunder of farm-houses in which stores of corn were known to exist. The report of the committee declared, on the 3rd of Aug., that all kinds of property in the provinces were exposed to the most shameful robbery; "the taxes and the seigniorial privileges," it said, "are abolished—the laws are without power, and the magistrates without influence, and the administration of justice an empty show."

The committee again knew no better expedient than an energetic proclamation; but a more extended and practical view of the case began to gain ground. It became evident that nothing could be preserved until that which was unworthy of preservation was completely abolished by law; that no government could exist, until it had gained for itself the free support of the nation.

At this juncture, the country was in the very focus of the Revolution. All these horrible scenes did but reveal the deep misery of thousands and thousands, whom the system of feudal rights—not by its abuses, but by its very nature—had condemned to slavery and hunger, through centuries gone by.

All other evils—the embarrassment of the treasury, the alternate weakness and violence of the monarchy, the humiliation of France abroad—all led up at last to one source, from which the physical and mental impoverishment of the French people flowed.

Whoever looks beyond the boundaries of the French kingdom and the actual time, will be convinced that the history of this century in Europe tells of little else but the annihilation of the feudal system; and that the Revolution, if it was to have a history, must pass sentence on the feudal system. Feudalism was indeed virtually scattered to the

winds, by the folly of the Breteuil ministry. What could a man of discernment and conscience desire more ardently than the ratification of its overthrow by a formal law? How could the man who bewailed the crimes which accompanied the outbreak of popular passion, but who loved his country and his people, have recourse to severity and vengeance, until that people was set free, and that country cleared of its abuses? The whole struggle which was carried on respecting the union of the three orders in one Assembly had had no other object than this. The abolition of the feudal system was the leaven of the political life of France, from the death of Louis the XIII. to the opening of the States-general. In this case, it was impossible to hesitate, and impossible to stop.

The liberal minority of the nobles did themselves honour, by taking the initiative on the night of the 4th of August. Practically speaking, it may be said that no great spirit of self-sacrifice was required to give up that which fire and sword had already utterly destroyed; but we ought to recognize the patriotic wisdom of those, who, with the view of promoting the future interests of their country, spontaneously pressed the seal of legality on their own losses. After Noailles and Aiguillon had brought forward the first motions,[1] the other members vied with one another in discussing and condemning every part of the ancient system. No one perhaps in the whole Assembly had had an idea how long and manifold was the catalogue of burdens that was now revealed with terrific clearness. I will not repeat the oft-told tale, how the zeal of the Assembly increased from hour to hour; how they hurried on in breathless haste—not even leaving themselves time to draw up regular decrees, and at last—that nothing might be omitted—

[1] The fact that they had just dined with the Duke of Orleans,—on which their opponents lay so much stress,—cannot alter the value of the motion.

voted only principles, hopes, and wishes, and directed their annihilating and liberating blows in every direction.

Serfdom, feudal jurisdiction, manorial ground-rents, tithes, game laws, saleable offices, fees, clerical robing dues, municipal and provincial privileges, privileges of rank, exemptions from taxes, plurality of offices and livings—were all swept away in breathless haste in one night, by the Assembly, who at last with tumultuous enthusiasm, passed a vote of thanks from the nation to Louis the XVI.—the restorer of freedom—and ordered the celebration of the Te Deum.

This was no act of ordinary legislation, for, if tried by such a standard, it would lie open to numerous objections. Some of the decrees annihilated fairly earned rights and revenues: and though a clause was added that these might still be enjoyed until some regulation had been made for compensation and redemption, it was well known that, in the present state of things even their temporary continuance was impossible. Another set of decrees did away with organic institutions, which were just as essential to the state as to the privileged classes—e. g. the seigniorial jurisdiction, the sale of offices, fees in the courts of law, and the game laws.

The National Assembly has been often blamed, with cheap wisdom, for not having first created the new order of things, since the proviso, that the old system was to continue till the introduction of the new, could have no effect. It is no doubt quite true that after the 4th of August no manorial judge could exercise his functions, no tithe farmer could levy, and no feudal lord obtain his dues; that the whole of France was covered with sportsmen, who trampled down the fields, injured the forests, and roasted the game in the forest itself with stolen wood; but it is just as certain that all these illegal acts were perpetrated without hindrance and without shame before that eventful night; that there was no power which could check these irregularities, and that they would have continued just the same had the decrees of the Assembly never been enacted. The great majority of

them therefore were absolutely indispensable, and it was of the greatest importance that they should be immediately issued.

What *was* blameable, and what made Mirabeau himself characterise the proceedings of the 4th as nocturnal orgies, was the reeling excitement which took possession of the Assembly; under the influence of which many unnecessary and illegal details were called into existence, many propositions, afterwards withdrawn, were thrown like fresh fuel into the flaming passions of the people, and served as a dangerous example for subsequent indiscretions.

Yet the Assembly had, after all, on the 4th of August, the lasting interests of the state, and the great laws of national development, on their side. Their decrees were a great manifesto in which the Assembly comprehended all the just wishes of the nation, and made itself the mouthpiece of all its real wants and hopes. It is not upon the destruction of the old system—through which the path to a better future led,—that the charges can be founded which may justly be brought against the Assembly. Their weakness was first brought to light by their voluntarily choosing the wrong path, out of the many new ones which lay before them.

Their new creations have long fallen into decay; but the advantages gained on the 4th of August are eternal; viz. freedom of labour, equality before the law, and the unity of the state.

Several days were spent in drawing up the decrees of that single night, some of which, as being too vague, were allowed to drop; others—such as the temporary continuance of abolished institutions—were expressed with greater accuracy. The sharpest discussion arose on the subject of tithes, in which, for the first time, a strong dislike of everything ecclesiastical manifested itself in the Assembly. It was in vain that Sièyes called on them, in the name of justice and the public weal, not to make a present, without any redemption, of 130 millions to the land-owners. Buzot replied, that having

lost their cause, the clergy should assume the grace of a voluntary renunciation, and remember that all their property belonged of right to the people. From a similar sentiment proceeded the decree which forbade the payment of all ecclesiastical dues to the Pope. In this instance the Assembly went beyond the bounds of that historical necessity, which sanctioned the other enactments. This was an arbitrary and illegal act of aggression, in which the most dangerous tendencies of the Revolution—hostility to the church, and contempt of international law—were manifested in close connexion.

CHAPTER III.

RIGHTS OF MAN.

General Lafayette.—His declaration of rights.—Parties in the national assembly.—The right.—The centre.—The left.—Mirabeau.—Constitutional questions.—suspensive veto.

No one perhaps entered upon the future, which the 5th of May 1789 opened to the French nation, with more restless hopes, than general Lafayette. After having seen the American war of liberation brought to a successful issue, he was busy with the thought of a similar revolution in France. The abuses of the old system were palpable to the eyes of all men, and he too knew them just well enough to be able to regard his inclinations as altogether patriotic. Among the notables and in the Assembly of his own province, he spoke against the dangers of the *lettres de cachet*, and for the necessity of the right of granting supplies, and the convocation of the States-general. He was able to judge of the illegality of Brienne's violent measures against the parliaments, and to attract attention by his opposition to them. He thus extended that liberal reputation which he had acquired by his crusade in America. He formed relations with all the discontented spirits of the time, became an intimate friend of the counsellor Duport, who was the very soul of the parliamentary disturbances of 1788, and soon became one of that small coterie which secretly guided the opposition at that period. As a matter of course, his popularity rapidly increased; and the more so because he displayed a decided talent in the character of prudent demagogue, and came to be regarded by men of very various

opinions as their future leader, without at all exposing himself to the displeasure of the ruling powers. He writes to a friend that he had united himself with every species of opposition, and used tools which must soon be broken—that he had tried every thing except civil war, and might have proceeded even to that extremity if he had not held it in abhorrence.

He thus entered into the Assembly of the States-general, not only to give his counsel, but prepared for revolution. He was not much observed at first, because in order to secure his election he had given a promise to an aristocratic constituency, only to advocate the union of the three orders in the event of a formal decree to that effect of the nobles themselves; and had thus deprived himself of the power of openly taking the side of the tiers état.

Even on the 27th of June, when the King ordered the union of the three orders, he called on the chamber of nobles to bear witness, how obedient he had been to his instructions. As, however, his quality as deputy of the aristocratic party appeared to him an incalculable misfortune, he meditated getting himself elected anew as a member of the tiers état in some supplementary election. These difficulties, however, did not hinder him from secretly forming democratic connexions. The Breton club—a union of liberal deputies, the majority of whom were representatives of Bretagne—was formed under the leadership of his friend Duport. Duport brought the Parisian democracy, which he gradually organised, into connexion with this club; and Lafayette, favoured by his reputation and his wealth, knew how to derive from it the greatest advantage for the extension of his influence.

The duke of Orleans, whose opposition to the court served as a rallying point for most of these intrigues, endeavoured to enter into relations with the young general as early as the beginning of July; but Lafayette, who already knew his own strength, and thoroughly despised the duke, coldly and contemptuously rejected his advances.

Mindful of his promise to his constituency Lafayette did not even yet vote in the Assembly; but he was not to be restrained from bringing forward a favourite and characteristic proposition, which gained for him the enthusiastic applause —not indeed of all the liberals—but at any rate of all the revolutionists. On the 11th of July, he proposed that a declaration of the *rights of man* should be issued on the American model.

But before this question was put to the vote, the same day decided in a different manner the position which he was to hold. The appointment of the Breteuil ministry proved to the tiers état, that other weapons besides those of the rostra must be employed, and that the issue would depend on the barricades of Paris, and the attitude assumed by the army. In this position of affairs it appeared desirable to place a man at the head of the Assembly who united in his own person both popular and military qualities.

As the post of president was already occupied, the hitherto unknown dignity of vice-president was created, in order to bestow it upon Lafayette, who was at that time the only distinguished general in the liberal party.

He accepted the office, and declared that the force of circumstances compelled him to pay no further regard to the instructions of his constituents, but to aid in the salvation of his country. This appointment was only a step to a position of much greater actual power; and on the 15th, he was proclaimed commander-in-chief of the people's army in Paris, by the enthusiastic acclamations of the populace assembled on the Place de Grêve. This force was called at that time the Civic Guard, but Lafayette, with a view to the union of all the militias in the kingdom, changed its name to that of National Guard. It wore the colours of the city, blue and red; but the new commander-in-chief, in order to distinguish it from the colours of the house of Orleans, which were the same, added the Bourbon white, and then electrified the hearts of the revolutionists by declaring that

this cockade would travel round the world. This was no empty phrase, for he had already formed connexions in Holland and Ireland, in order, by raising disturbances in both these countries, to destroy the influence of England, which he had learned to hate in the American war.[1] He was only restrained from a more extensive propaganda by the entreaties of the ministers, Necker and Montmorin, who by no means wished to add to their difficulties at home by foreign complications.

We see how little he was adapted for teaching the Revolution to respect the rights of nations.

Still more momentous was the effect of his proposal to issue a declaration of the rights of man. He was not the originator of the idea of imitating in France the manifesto directed by the Americans against England. The same proposition is found in several electoral *cahiers;* and in the committee on the constitution, Sièyes, to whose abstract tendencies it was well suited, carried a motion for making it the subject of discussion.

There seemed indeed to be something in the air which led men to busy themselves with political theories, and to make an immediate application of them to the events of the day. All traditionary law was uncertain, obnoxious to the new ideas of freedom, and continually made the subject of dispute. A deep, ardent, and justifiable conviction prevailed in men's minds, that the future fabric of the state must be erected upon entirely different views of the physical and moral world; and nothing was more natural than the wish of the reformers to render the leading principles of those views, clear to themselves, their contemporaries, and their posterity. Considered in this light, the declaration of rights, in spite of all its faults and imperfections, will ever remain a mighty landmark between two ages of the world, and will for ever indicate the source and direction of a new current in the political life of Europe.

[1] *Mémoires*, IV. 82.

It is, nevertheless, true that the form and manner in which it was introduced reveal to us, in the clearest light, the deadly sickness of the France of that day, and the terrible nature of the impending crises. Lafayette's motion for a proclamation of the rights of man was a symptom of this disease, and not a step towards its cure. The evil lay in this, that no one in France stood any longer in any living relation to the state—the state as it really and actually existed;—that the lapse of several hundred years had only developed in one party the desire to make the state an engine for the furtherance of its own interest, and in the other, the ardent longing for equal enjoyments and privileges. Every man thought of himself and his friends alone—no one asked the question to what services he and every other citizen ought to bind themselves, under existing circumstances, in order to render the state capable of fulfilling their wishes. Some voices in the Assembly—the abbé Grégoire and the Jansenist Camus—did, indeed, demand a declaration of *duties*; but we may easily imagine that they produced but little effect; since they too took the ground of the universal moral law, and thereby utterly failed in removing the real fault and danger of the declaration of rights. Theoretical definitions of universal moral principles brought them no whit nearer to the accomplishment of the task before them; on the contrary, they threatened to cover the land with a flood of pernicious errors, since even the soundest philosophical principles cannot be applied to actual human life, with its wants and passions, without considerable modifications. But if the declaration of rights was to be made capable of immediate application—if it was to assign to every Frenchman, according to his position in the state, his rights and duties—then it would be nothing else than the future constitution itself; and nothing was more appropriate than Mirabeau's proposal, that if a declaration of fundamental principles was wished for at all, it should be made after the work of constructing the constitution had been accomplished.

Lafayette's motion contained three principal propositions; all men are free and equal, and nothing but a regard for the public good can be the source of any difference between them; all men have the right to resist oppression; all sovereignty has its origin in the people; and no individual may exercise any authority unless it be expressly entrusted to him by the people.

He goes on to deduce from these principles freedom of religion and the press—security of person and property—submission to the law to which a man has either in person or by representatives agreed—and separation of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers. All this, lastly, was laid down, not as a programme of the future constitution, but as the natural and universal right of all men; the previous denial of which was both illegal and immoral.

The fundamental principle on which these propositions rested was highly significant. The movement which led to the overthrow of the feudal system might be comprehended in the words;—every thing *for* the people. Lafayette now laid equal stress upon the second demand;—everything *by* the people.

In doing this he failed to see the difference between the two propositions in respect to their feasibility. Every wise government can shape the institutions of any state, with a view to the public good, if it has but the will to do so. But a nation creates a successful administration from its own resources, not when it will, but when it can. The mass of mankind cannot be gifted with political wisdom by a mere verdict of the law that they have attained their political majority, but by the diffusion of intellectual, and still more of moral education. At the period of which we speak the French nation was as badly prepared as possible for self-government; the masses were sunk in the deepest ignorance and the higher orders in an unexampled immorality.

On the one side, there was a burning desire for revenge

and destruction, and, on the other, for dominion and wealth; but nowhere an enlightened public spirit; and the majority of the nation had just as much patriotism as is made up of a bold contempt for the dangers of war, and an instinctive abhorrence of foreign countries. To summon such a people to immediat eand universal sovereignty, was to lead it through the exhausting excesses of anarchy to the arms of protecting despotism.

This mistake was rendered doubly pernicious by the world-embracing form in which the proposition was made. It is true indeed that not only the French, but every nation, ought to be educated for self-government. But whether it will decree by law the immediate exercise of self-government, must be left to the option of each individual state; and the vanity, which led Lafayette to regard himself and his Revolution as liberators of the world, was an inflammatory encroachment not only upon the order, but upon the freedom, of all other states. We might perhaps excuse him by remembering that the violent proceedings at Versailles had at any rate the merit of giving an emphatic lesson to peoples and rulers how to carry on their future political education; but then we must all the more deplore, that this ideal public law was not more clearly thought out, and better drawn up in its details.

Though Lafayette started upon the just principle, that the dignity of man—the image of God—is reflected in every human being, without respect to rank or possessions, yet he falsified this principle in almost every application of it. Instead of merely claiming equality before the law, he demanded *actual* equality, and thereby annihilated all existing rights. Instead of pointing out to the government the duty of extending political knowledge more and more widely among the people, he proclaimed the right of every individual to resist every unpopular law, and to do away with every existing government. He thereby raised to the throne not the will of the whole community, but the caprice of indivi-

duals, not the reason which is common to all men, but the aggregate of individual passions—to which he exposed not only the state but private property, which is the foundation of the most deeply felt inequality. He in fact destroyed his own nearest and dearest object, viz. the possibility of a parliamentary constitution, and a democratic state. For, according to his propositions, it is just as much slavery to be obliged to obey the behest of elected representatives, as the commands of an hereditary king. On these principles no commonwealth could be founded but one in which the mass of the people had not only the legislative and executive power in their hands, but the right of breaking every self-imposed obligation, and disposing of all kinds of property.

This is perhaps the idea of the social republic; but it is just the really democratic state which most requires the obedience of the individual to laws when once enacted, and the respect of the state for individual rights when once acquired. The more democratic the constitution of a state, the more reason it has to reject Lafayette's "rights of man."

Lafayette and his friends had no clear idea of the bearings of their own principles. In spite of all his longing for democratic reputation, he always retained the feelings of the aristocratic gentleman; and in the heat of his popular zeal had no presentiment of the communistic tendency of his actions. His eyes were not opened by the fact that Marat and Robespierre—the two men who contributed more than any one else to his subsequent overthrow—characterised the declaration of the rights of man as the one good deed of the Assembly, and maintained that every other constitution was superfluous. It was all the more melancholy that the majority of the Assembly, though by no means followers of Marat, took up the proposal of the general with the greatest zeal, immediately after the storms of July. An immense number of deputies announced their intention of speaking, and scheme after scheme was brought forward in quick succession. It is impossible to read any thing more

painful, tiresome and humiliating, than the discussion in which the meaning of the words *right* and *freedom* was to be ascertained by a numerical majority, and the result laid down as the standard of every citizen's obedience towards the law, in all states and in all ages. An uncontrollable zeal prevailed to remove all historical rubbish, and to prepare a site for the erection of a universal state, founded upon pure reason.

It was to no purpose that Malouet and Clermont-Tonnerre warned them against these self-glorifying metaphysics; and Mounier and Lally-Tollendal reminded them of the existing prerogatives of the King. Mirabeau excited great discontent when he more and more decidedly refused to have anything to do with this abolition of all political order; and there was at last a most violent outbreak of wrath, when, both from the rostra and through the press, he constantly advocated the expediency of deferring the declaration of rights to more peaceful times, when the constitution should have been completed. The Assembly waded indefatigably through the miseries of this long debate. In spite of numberless amendments, the discussion was at last brought to a close, and on the 27th of August the declaration of the rights of man was completed.

It differed in almost every part from the wording of Lafayette's original motion; yet it did not remove a single fault of that motion, while it added to it many seeds of confusion and dissolution. It committed not only the criticism but the initiation of the most important acts of government, to the passing caprice of individuals and the popular masses.

"Every citizen" says the sixth article, "has the right, in person, or by his representatives, to take part in the making of the laws." "Every citizen," says the fourteenth, "has the right, either personally, or by his representatives, to take into consideration the necessity of the taxes;—freely to grant them, to make a proposition as to their application, as well

as to fix the mode of their assessment; and to make any alteration in them that may seem expedient." The Assembly, it is true, meant nothing more by this enactment, than that the representatives of the people should have the right of making laws and granting taxes in their own hands, and that the individual citizen should abide by the decree of the Assembly. But it is evident, that the article itself made the individual citizens competent, under certain circumstances, to reverse this relation—to resume their original rights, and then to declare any further action on the part of the deputies unnecessary. With regard to the relation between the citizens themselves, they tried to soften down the general expression of Lafayette, "all men are equal," by adding, "possess equal rights." But though they thus rendered a better interpretation possible, they did not make the more pernicious explanation of the clause impossible. He who wished to do so might now understand the article to mean, that the state left the road to the attainment of every right equally open to every citizen; but he whose wishes aimed higher found every reason in the wording of this article to insist on the equalisation of the actual condition of men, and not to endure any inequality whatever. It was at this crisis that the future course of the Revolution was decided; and it was now, also, that the revolutionary parties assumed their distinctive form and colour. There were three great divisions of the Assembly, which henceforward struggled for power, and soon separated from one another by occupying different parts of the hall in which they met. On the extreme right, sat most of the nobles and bishops—the uncompromising adherents of the ancien régime; who were ready indeed to make certain reforms, but in principle firmly adhered to the views of the 23rd of June, according to which the people was to be subordinate to the King, and the King to the ancient orders. Their numbers decreased every day, because the noblemen emigrated more and more frequently; partly from fear

of disturbances, and partly from hatred to the Revolution; but those who were left seemed only to be possessed by a more blind and violent zeal, which increased the exasperation of their opponents. Their best representatives in the Assembly were, first, the Abbot Maury, a bold and insolent speaker of superabundant talent, a man of abandoned life, and so void of all moral earnestness that he readily changed his colours at a later period. For the present, however, he defended the monarchy, the law, and the church, by the alternate wit and pathos of his oratory. Secondly, Captain Cazalès, a chivalrous officer *sans peur et sans réproche*, a man of limited but honest judgment, of warm heart and impetuous will, a ready debater, and always prepared to defend his words against every opponent with his sword.

On the whole, this party displayed all the virtues, and all the faults, of the ancien régime—devoted courage, trifling frivolity, and invincible obstinacy. They were ready to *lose* their heads for their cause, but not to *use* them rationally and seriously; they fought round the banner of discipline and order, but were entirely incapable of sacrificing a single prejudice or feeling to the necessities of their country or party.

The Centre united the moderate men of the Right and the Left—the deputies, who, being convinced of the rottenness of the old system, had defeated the violent measures of Brêteuil by the revolt of July, but regarded the Revolution as an act of self-defence, and not as a permanent right, and wished, as soon as possible, to found the new political system on the ruins of the old.

This party comprehended individual politicians of character and talent—the eloquent and enthusiastic Lally-Tollendal—the ever active and ever trustworthy Malouet—the clever and learned Mounier, who had been the first in his province to foretell the fall of feudalism, and who now, in the Assembly, prophesied more clearly than the majority of his associates, the dangers of the new system.

His success was unfortunately but small. The great majority of those who held the same opinions as he, were honourable men, enthusiastic for freedom, longing for the re-establishment of order, but without sufficient knowledge of the country; their education too was rather that of lawyers than statesmen, and they were ignorant of the primary requisites of a good administration. They suffered, likewise, from all those disadvantages, which, in stormy times, render the formation of a moderate party difficult; viz., the weakness of critical reason, when opposed to the onset of passion—the want of harmony in their own ranks—and the clogging apprehension of the dangers which impended from different quarters. All these difficultes, however, might have been overcome; but there existed another, far more important, by which the fate of the party was decided. We need not waste words in proving that the chief, nay the indispensable condition of success in the prosecution of their objects, was an absolute unity between the Assembly and the government. The ministry of the 15th July contained some members of this party; and Necker, who had always belonged to it, was at the head of that ministry. Every one would suppose that the most imperative task of such a government would be to extend and organise this party, and that they would make it their especial care to reconcile all personal animosities by their influence, and to silence by their authority all differences of opinion. Such a task was quite within the limits of human power, however difficult it might be. Weak as the government at this time was, it possessed, at any rate, the authority derived from official experience, and superior technical skill; and great as was the mistrust which prevailed in the Assembly, there were means of winning and guiding all the members without exception. The court, at this period, would have proved no obstacle; the Polignac coterie was dispersed through all quarters of the globe; the queen was bowed to the ground; and Louis XVI. was without any will or aim of his own. In this direction,

therefore, Necker had his hands entirely free. But again his utter incapacity was fully manifested. He not only did nothing of any moment, either in forming a liberal government party, or in assuming on the part of the government a wise initiative of sound reforms; but he did not even attempt to do either the one or the other; nay, incredible as it may seem, he was a real hindrance to any progress in either of these directions. There was ill humour and irritability enough among the deputies, but he was the most irritable and sensitive of them all. The other ministers were by no means men of high, creative talent, but he seemed to make it a principle to prevent the government from shewing any sign of life. He seldom came forward at all, and all that we can report of his operations is, that he continued to manœuvre with the old financial measures—to irritate the Assembly unnecessarily by finding fault with unimportant trifles—timidly to yield to all the important demands of the anarchists—and, lastly, to cling with unreasonable pertinacity to his office. No wonder then that he lost his influence in a week, his popularity in a month, and forfeited his political existence in a year. No wonder that such a government could prepare for the Revolution no other result than anarchy and terrorism.

It was not the overpowering force of a principle, or the uncontrollable impulse of a natural cause, which brought about the subsequent mischief, but personal deficiencies and avoidable errors. An active and constructive policy on the part of the Centre in 1789 had become impossible, not, as the Right complained, because it had, on the 14th of July, cast away the principle of authority; not, as the Left noisily declared, because it had lost its power by inconsistency and treachery to the cause of freedom; but because the new birth of government was impeded by the government itself.

On the left, lastly, sat the worshippers of the rights of man, and the sovereignty of the people, *pur et simple;*—the thorough-going opponents of the church and the aris-

tocracy—the enthusiastic advocates of unchecked agitation in the popular masses. The great majority of these could always be roused to enthusiasm, by the words, "country, freedom, rights!" It seemed to them impossible to go too far; they did not believe that a state could be injured by bestowing too extensive privileges upon the incapable, or that a people could be ruined by the too unbridled liberty of the unworthy. They still lived in the triumphant storming of the Bastille.

The evils of the ancien régime were ever before their eyes, and they thought that its destruction and their own victory could never be sufficiently complete. Whatever was in any degree connected with the former state of things—court and clergy, nobility and parliaments—they looked upon with distrust and dislike; whatever was opposed to these was regarded with admiration or treated with palliative indulgence. Most of them were personally blameless men, but their intelligence and character were inadequate for the task before them; and their excitable natures needed, above all things, the steady guidance of a liberal government.

Since this, as we have seen, was entirely wanting, the party fell into the hands of the leading demagogues among them, not one of whom deserved, by his talent or his political sentiments, so important a position. Sieyès, who, at an earlier and a later period, succeeded in influencing them, had at that time sulkily abstained from taking part in the debates. He was succeeded by another churchman, Bishop Talleyrand d'Autun, a nobleman of high rank, who in consequence of a bodily defect had entered the clerical profession, with most profane and worldly sentiments.

This man was a very paragon of supple intellect and cool calculating knowledge of the world; good-humoured in private intercourse, but unconsciencious and rapacious in the important business of life.

The leaders of the Breton club made themselves remarkable by their violent radicalism. In close intimacy with the acute

and consistent logician Duport were the chevalier Lameth, and Barnave the advocate; the former of these was a shallow empty-headed, but extremely restless and presumptuous man; the latter an enthusiastic and impetuous orator, pure in his morals, and amiable in his character, but carried away for the moment by a boundless fanaticism. Their friends used to characterize these three men by saying, that what Duport thought, Barnave expressed in his orations, and Lameth carried out in his actions.

Still farther to the left sat a small group of adherents of the Duke of Orleans;—men, without exception, as abandoned as their patron, who exercised no influence in the Assembly, but were dangerous from their connexion with the worst portion of the Parisian mob. Beyond these, finally, was a small group on the extreme left, who seldom put themselves forward for the present, but regarded all that had hitherto been done as merely a superficial commencement of the real revolution, and hoped for a democratic future. At their head were the lawyers Petion of Chartres, Buzot of Evreux, and Robespierre of Arras.[1]

The only statesman in the Assembly—the only man who could guide them to the completion of their task—was Mirabeau.[2] This extraordinary man was born A. D. 1749, and was therefore in the prime of life. Nature had bestowed her gifts upon him with a most lavish profusion. His father, a clever but self-willed and whimsical man, beheld with astonishment the extraordinary endowments of his son, the wealth of his genius, his charming amiability and his wild passions. He thought he must regulate and control a character like this by the severest discipline; and the violent resistance of

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[1] Louis Blanc, B I. ch. 8, from *Unpublished Letters of Robespierre* (on occasion of the procession of May 4th 1789): "Un seul dans ce cortège, un seul presentait alors, illuminé qu'il était par sa conviction, les conséquences suprèmes." — [2] L. Blanc says: "Il y avait dans l'Assemblée un quatrième parti—ce parti était un homme, et cet homme était Mirabeau.

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his son led him step by step to the greatest tyranny. The unavoidable consequences soon followed; the son broke all the ties which bound him to his father, home and family, rushed into the wildest excesses, and forfeited for ever the nobility of moral purity and innocence.

But his intellect was constructed on so gigantic a scale, that it passed unscathed through the foul debauchery of his life. He had never gone through any regular course of study, but in the midst of his saturnalia he was able to seize with surpassing genius on all that was presented to his notice—politics and history—administration and finance—legal and constitutional questions. Long before the Revolution broke out, he had made up his mind as to its necessity, and the course which it would take. Though as proud an aristocrat as any of the orthodox cavaliers, he tracked out the rottenness of the feudal state with burning and patriotic hatred; and in a series of masterly controversial pamphlets, he pourtrayed the picture of the future France, in sharply defined and brilliant features.

He gave the death-blow to Calonne's unconsciencious financial policy, and branded the weakness of Necker, while the rest of the world still regarded him as the infallible god of political economy. Even at that time he occupied the highest place in public attention. Short, thickset, marked with the small-pox, and cynical as he was, he enchanted every one by his conversation, and shook the hearts of his hearers by his incomparable eloquence. Never, perhaps, did a parliamentary statesman excite such ardent admiration or such bitter hatred. Whilst the liberals, as early as 1785, regarded him as the only man worthy of being minister of finance, he was looked upon by the adherents of the *ancien régime* as the real fire-brand of the Revolution. The ministers, at the very beginning of the elections, wished to transport Mirabeau to the East Indies, as the most dangerous of demagogues; but were prevented from doing so by the good-natured intervention of the King.

It was a part of the healthy grandeur of his character, that circumstances like these did not make the smallest impression upon him; vast as his ambition was, he was entirely free from personal sensitiveness, and selfish irritability. He wished to rule France, because he thought that he himself possessed—and *exclusively* possessed—the power to do so. He struck all presumptuous mediocrity with crushing blows, but he had no other thought or wish in his own mind than that his power should contribute to the welfare of his country.

Such was the Assembly, which now prepared to follow up the declaration of the Rights of man, by drawing up the constitution. In doing this, will the Assembly develope the principles of that declaration, or prove untrue to them in the very first steps they take?

They began with the intention of proceeding very slowly and methodically, from the rights of the citizens to those of the nation—from the nation to its representatives—and from the representatives to the King. But such a mode of proceeding was not suited to this divided, inflammable, and inexperienced Assembly; and the whole circumstances of the case impelled them to the consideration and settlement of a few great leading points. The debate therefore quickly broke through all rules and previous arrangements, and before they were aware of it, the different parties found themselves engaged in a conflict about the most comprehensive of all political questions—the relation of the Assembly to the King. All the antagonistic principles of different systems, and all the inflammable materials of practical politics, were here united.

By degrees the contest came to turn upon the following points; shall the legislative body be divided into different chambers?. shall there be an interval between its sessions? shall the King receive in the new constitution any share in the legislative authority? Ought any part to be awarded to the King in drawing up the future constitution?

The report of the committee on these questions proceeded

from the coterie to which Necker had formerly considered himself to belong, and of which Mounier was now the head, and several liberal noblemen, Lally-Tollendal and Clermont-Tonnerre, &c., the principal organs. They had all zealously contributed to the overthrow of the feudal state, and their aim at present was directed towards a democratic modification of the English constitution. In addition to the representatives of the people, they desired to have a senate composed of members for life; they advocated triennial parliaments, and uninterrupted sessions; and they held that no law ought to be considered valid, without the consent of both houses, and the sanction of the King.

Of these motions the one which advocated the permanent session of parliament was sure to be carried; since it was brought forward by the Centre, and was entirely in accordance with the principles of the Left. The other, which proposed two chambers was fiercely debated. The Left rose in tumultuous opposition to it, and protested against such a violation of the original Rights of man. Mirabeau, who had as much weight as a whole party, was indifferent on this head, but he rather inclined to the system of one chamber, which should carry on its business in two divisions; and, lastly, the Right grudged their liberal colleagues the satisfaction of occupying the new chamber of peers. It was soon apparent, therefore, that this motion would be lost by an overwhelming majority. Consequently, all the doubts, the interests, and the passions of the Assembly were directed towards the third question—the right of the King to put his veto on a decree of the chamber.

On this occasion it was not the Centre, but the Left, which stood alone. It was not merely the Right which zealously fought for the King, but even Mirabeau had maintained the same views with effective energy, in the month of June, when the union of the different orders was discussed.

If he did this at a time when power and its abuses were all on the side of the crown, he was still less inclined to

weaken the royal authority, now that the government was nothing, and the parliament omnipotent. The opinions of the majority were clearly manifested soon afterwards, when a decided royalist was elected to the presidential chair.[1] The Left foresaw their own defeat, and resorted to every means to gain by intimidation, what was denied them by the free votes of the majority. Their adherents in Paris threatened an armed expedition to Versailles, to turn the traitors out of the Assembly; and a notorious brawler, the Marquis St. Huruge, tried to set an armed mob in motion for this purpose. But the National guard immediately put an end to this disturbance, and St. Huruge ran roaring away from their patrols.

It was well known at Versailles that the real power of the capital was in the hands of the commander of the National guard, general Lafayette. Several of the deputies who were seriously afraid of the agitators, enquired with double anxiety after the views of this sole saviour and protector; and like the deputies, the ministers, too, asked this civic dictator his opinion of the veto. With strong protestations of obedience and loyalty, he replied that he had no objection to the absolute veto *per se;* but, he said, it was possible that disturbances might arise, and therefore advised the expedient of a merely postponing veto, and, lastly, he begged the government above all things to make the King popular in Paris.[2]

Hereupon Necker thought it a master-stroke to propose this expedient to the Assembly in the name of the King himself;

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[1] Louis Blanc, B. II. ch. 4: quotes the words of Desmoulins: "Nous n'étions pas alors plus de dix républicains en France." When Robespierre wished to discuss the proposition — "The French constitution is monarchical" — he begged to be allowed fully to explain his views *sans crainte de murmures.* — [2] This has been lately confirmed by his correspondence with Latour-Maubourg at the close of Vol. I. of Mortimer-Ternaux's *Hist. de la Terreur.*

the King, he said, would give up his veto, if two following Assemblies adhered to the same resolution.

The effect of this proposal was immense. All the wavering spirits forsook the cause which had forsaken itself; the system of two chambers was rejected on the 10th, and on the 11th the suspensive veto carried by a large majority. It was in vain that the royalists, in desperation, objected, that the King could have no voice respecting the constitution, which could alone grant him the right of sanction or of veto—and that the Assembly itself was merely constituent. Such a declaration, proceeding from such a quarter, might serve to show more plainly the complicated lock in public affairs, but could not avert the defeat of the royal cause: the Left, on the other hand, followed up their advantage with energy, and when the question was brought forward, through how many sittings of the chamber the veto was to remain in force, Barnave proposed to defer the settlement of this point, until the King had sanctioned the decrees of 4th August. Whereupon Necker, who had already deprived the King of his veto, was shortsighted enough to put into the royal mouth a pedantic criticism of the decrees themselves. Numerous motions were then brought forward that the chamber should adopt in a formal resolution the opinions lately expressed by Mounier and Mirabeau, in opposition to Necker, viz. that the King had nothing whatever to do with the settlement of the constitution, but had simply to promulgate the decrees of the national will. Such a resolution, when once it had become law, would have been equivalent to the deposition of the King; but on this occasion Mirabeau came to the rescue. To have come forward as a defender of the King, would only have injured himself and his cause; and he seized with angry delight the opportunity of humbling Necker. With the thundering force of his eloquence he set up the omnipotence of the Assembly, in opposition to the critical explanations of the minister. He said that if the King refused to obey, they must disregard him altogether; that

the Assembly had hitherto wisely refrained from discussing the royal sanction to the constitution, because they had the greatest confidence in the goodness of the royal intentions; that the King should beware how he tore away the veil with his own hand. The Assembly thus raised to a proud self-consciousness, allowed itself to be appeased without coming to any decision, and Necker hastened to procure the unconditional acceptance of the decrees on the part of the King, with the least possible delay. The duration of the veto was then extended on 21st September, according to the wish of the minister, to two sessions. The monarchy thus suffered, after all, another defeat, and the principles of the rights of man penetrated more and more deeply into the political life of the nation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CAPITAL.

Continuance of anarchy in the provinces.—New authorities in Paris.—Their contest with the democrats.—Social question.—Orleans wishes to drive away the king.—Lafayette wishes to take him to Paris.—Revolt of oct. 5th.—October 6th.—The king to Paris.

The confusion in the provinces continued even after the decrees of August. The benefits of these enactments were not made available to the people by a firm maintenance of order; and, on the other hand, the violations of private rights, which they rendered necessary, were made more injurious, by the proclamation of the rights of man. The peasants hunted their former lords like wild beasts, in the name of the sacred duty of insurrection; and they withheld the dues which had been spared by the decree of the 4th, as a property which was not serviceable to the commonwealth. They paid, moreover, but few taxes to the state itself, on the ground that they had never yet personally granted a tax; in short licence and disorder got the upper hand in all directions.

The fate of the National Assembly was the usual one in such cases, when the physician tries a soothing remedy without comprehending the real source of the disease—and just the best-meant measures had in the end the most injurious consequences. In order that the impotence of the provincial authorities might not put a complete stop to business, the Assembly took the government of the provinces into its own hands, by means of committees of administration and of police. The inevitable consequence was the openly

declared insignificance of the ministers, whom no one could any longer regard as holding the reins of power. In order to restore the safety of person and property, the Assembly further bestowed on the civic authorities the right of calling out the troops of the line; but as this power was not vested in any other authority, the ministry found itself dependent for its personal preservation on the municipality of the capital. We shall see hereafter of what enormous consequence this circumstance became.

In Paris, meanwhile, the new order of things made slow but continual progress. The centre of government was formed by the representatives of the districts, whose numbers were originally 120, but were soon increased to 240 and then to 300; they had to deliberate and decide on all questions, where permanent regulations and more serious expenditure were concerned. The care of the current administration, or, as they preferred calling it, the executive power, was in the hands of the mayor and the town council, which was chosen by and from the above-mentioned representatives, and carried on its business by means of committees. The honest Bailly, who loved to employ himself with political questions in his study, and had presided in the tennis-court with patriotic pride, found himself, all at once, at the head of an administration, with a task of infinite difficulty before him, with a terrible responsibility, and very inadequate means. It was long before any kind of order could be introduced into the transaction of business; everybody, in fact, had to be prepared for every office; and when they had tasked every power from early morning till late in the night, they were thankful if things were in as tolerable a state as before. The last thing they could look for was appreciation of their services; for, since July, all the world possessed both the desire and the ability to rule. The municipality criticized the mayor, and the great committee criticised the municipality; and Bailly was at a loss to understand how his zeal deserved so many votes of want of confidence.

Every district, moreover, had its assembly, and its president, and these zealously vied with one another in taking charge of the commonwealth, and a dozen times a day, lent their support to the Hôtel de Ville in the shape of demands and admonitions! To add to the confusion, the trade corporations began to bestir themselves. The journeymen shoemakers demanded an increase of wages, and restriction of the cobblers. The hair-dressers demanded a reduction of the apprentice tax; the butchers set up their meat stalls how and where they pleased, declaring that they would suffer no reaction against their sovereign will; and the municipality allowed matters to take their own course.

At first, indeed, the new authorities had every reason to be cautious in their movements; for, since the 14th of July, every man was armed, and, in addition to the muskets of the Hôtel des Invalides, there were fifty thousand pikes in the hands of the proletaries. It was Lafayette's first care to change this condition of things, by bringing the new National guard into a state of completeness, and gradually disarming the rest of the populace. Every district furnished four companies of a hundred men each; the officers were elected in the district Assembly; and as the men were rather expensively accoutred, the poorest class was necessarily excluded. To these were added one company of paid troops in each district, called the "company of the centre," consisting mostly of old French guardsmen, whose officers at this time were appointed by Lafayette.[1] The general quickly succeeded in attaching them to his person, and the unpaid guards also rendered him an unconditional obedience. At the head of these 30,000 men,—the only available force in the kingdom,—Lafayette was the real master of Paris, and consequently, without question, the most powerful man in the state.

When these military arrangements had been completed,

[1] Besides these, there were eight companies of cavalry. Poisson, I. 82.

the municipality was able to breathe more freely, and to enter upon a contest, which they had hitherto deferred by making concessions. The meetings in the Palais Royal were still continually held, and those who composed them prided themselves on having saved the state by the Revolution of July; and had no idea of allowing themselves to be tyrannised over by the civic authorities.

The *habitués* of the Palais Royal, who were at that time roused to enthusiasm by Desmoulins, St. Huruge, Loustalot, and others, were of an entirely different class from those who are seen under similar circumstances at the present day. Modern revolutions also know those vagabonds, who suddenly emerge from the ground at the outbreak of disorder, and who far surpass the native population in wildness and audacity. But the numbers of the latter are not to be compared with those of the times of which we speak. In the revolutionary convulsions of 1789 to 1795, the importance of the houseless and vagrant population can hardly be rated too highly. The surveillance of the police, and the care of the poor, was much less complete, and the production and distribution of the necessaries of life far less regular and certain, than at present.

A scarcity of provisions, and consequent famine, were matters of frequent occurrence, and drove immense masses of men from their familiar haunts. The government had continually to struggle with this danger. In the reign of Louis XIV., swarms of beggars, to the number of hundreds and thousands, made their appearance, and proved a real plague to the villages, on which they often levied contributions with open violence. The state had no means against the claims of their misery but severe punishments; no wonder then that the evil was transmitted in its full miserable extent from one generation to another, and that riot everywhere found in these swarms of desperate men a force always ready to proceed to the worst extremities. "There are in Paris," said Loustalot on one occasion, "40,000 strangers,

who have no settled employment, and live in lodgings; for these the Palais Royal serves as the place of meeting."[1] Another difference between the Paris of those times, and the Paris of to-day, was owing to the circumstance that there were then no factory workmen, united together in disciplined masses by the fact of their being employed on the same machinery.

The kernel, therefore, of the assembly in the Palais Royal was formed by the journeymen and the poorer master-workmen, whose position was generally far more needy than that of the artisans of the present day.

It was much easier then than now, under favourable circumstances, to kindle a flame in these loosely connected materials, especially as their political ignorance was far greater; but it was also easier, by the employment of the requisite address, to allay a seemingly terrible excitement. In the present day it takes longer to put the closely connected masses of workmen into motion; but when once aroused, they show greater endurance and perseverance; such events as the battles in the streets of Paris in June 1848, would have been simply impossible at the period of the first Revolution.

The Palais Royal had different methods of keeping its adherents in train. As the excitement, at that time, proceeded from the position of the whole state, and all hopes and fears and passions were naturally raised to the highest pitch, it needed but little art and trouble to keep the popular waves in perpetual motion. The most powerful engine was the press, which covered every house with its placards, filled the streets with its criers, and spread its journals through all classes. People were far more easily satisfied in this respect than at present; most of the newspapers appeared in a small 8vo form—the most influential of them only once a week—and were often adorned with horrible wood-cuts.

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[1] Louis Blanc, B. IV. ch. 2, on the authority of Monteil, reckons the number of vagrant beggars in 1789 at two millions.

The writers confined themselves to drastic disquisitions on the most popular questions of the day; and appealed—without any attempt to instruct or systematize—to the favourite passions of the reader; and, consequently, produced a far greater effect than our own great journals. If we except the "French Mercury" of Mallet du Pan, and Mirabeau's "Courrier de la Provence," the press, of which we speak, was similar to the German democratic papers of 1848, whether we look at the education and taste, or the opinions and character, of its editors.

Its historical importance was rendered greater than that of the modern German newspapers, not by the superiority of its writers, but by the greater excitability of the French nation. The most gifted of these journalists was, indisputably, Camille Desmoulins, in whose easy *causerie*, patriotism and licentiousness, love of freedom and venomous scorn, grace and cruelty, were continually mingled. His writings were like flowers upon a dunghill, and his life like a many-coloured, but scorching and quickly extinguished firework. By his side marched Loustalot with sedater step, whose clumsy bitterness was redeemed by the earnestness of a genuine conviction, and an excitement which devoured his own heart; while Paul Marat, the "friend of the people," complacently displayed, in every number, his boiling hatred, his restless suspicion, and his half-demented conceit. A singular feature of the times, by the way, was the monopoly possessed by this press for the whole of France. It was only by degrees that newspapers were established here and there in the provinces, and even to these the Parisian papers continued to give the tone; Loustalot *e.g.* had for a time 200,000 subscribers.

Side by side with the press, the clubs now began to operate. The Breton club had some branches in Paris and the neighbouring towns; and another—the club of Montrouge—made itself conspicuous by a somewhat coarser popularity; but all these were as yet in their cradle, and had but little

influence. Far more active were single *coteries*, united together for transient purposes; the foremost of which was composed of the friends of the Duke of Orleans—Biron, La Clos and Sillery. These men still hoped to raise the Duke to the position of lieutenant-general or regent, and spent large sums on influential demagogues, by which means they stamped all the popular movements with their own impress, and gave to the Orleans party a far greater name than really belonged to it. Their loudest organ in the Palais Royal was St. Huruge; and beyond the Seine, Danton, the lawyer, agitated the district of the Cordéliers. "Come," said he to a friend, "and howl with us, you will earn much money, and you can still choose your party afterwards."[1]

The subjects, by the discussion of which these leaders inflamed the passions of their crowded audience, were the same as in all other revolutions;—the same as have done good service in our own times. Among us, men spoke of the threatening "reaction", and the "social question"; while at the time of which we speak, they made use of the simpler terms, "conspiracy of the aristocrats" and "dear bread". The slightest symptom of these evils led to tumults, robberies, homicide, and, as was naturally the case, the final object of all complaints was the nearest magistracy—that of the Hotel de Ville. On one occasion a crowd stopped a boat, in which by command of the commune, gunpowder was being conveyed away; some one read in the permit *poudre de traitre* instead of *poudre de traite*,[2] and immediately a furious tumult broke out, in which the life of the accused officer was rescued with extreme difficulty. It often occurred that the bakers, whose lives were not safe if their bread was not sufficient in quantity, or not agreeable to the taste of the people, plundered the convoys of flour

[1] The name of this man was Lavaux. Extracts from his adventures are given by Villenave, *Biographie univ.*, art. *Danton*. — [2] *Poudre de traite* is bad powder which the slave ships carried to exchange for negroes.

which had been ordered by the city; and then the Palais Royal abused the wretched administration, for not putting an end to the scarcity, by hanging the corn usurers. When the uniforms of the National Guard made their appearance, a cry of horror ran through the whole Palais Royal; now, they cried, freedom was for ever lost, and the aristocracy of wealth had succeeded to the aristocracy of birth. In short, the communal authorities were soon convinced that either their power, or that of the Palais Royal, must come to an end. Their first measures were directed against the hole-and-corner Press, and they ordered that nothing should be printed without the name of a responsible editor. When the Palais Royal thundered against such a tyrannical and oppressive order, which trampled on the very first principles of law, the commune forbad all seditious Assemblies; whereupon the Palais Royal issued a violent protest and openly refused obedience. The National Guard then interfered—cleared the garden by their patrols—closed the cafés—and hunted down and arrested a great number of people. The patriots were furious, and now for the first time a new distinction of classes was publicly spoken of, of which we have heard so much in our own day. The people were called upon to rise against the tyranny of the *Bourgeoisie.* This designation dated from the times of the ancien régime when by "bourgeoisie" was understood the hereditary possessors of municipal offices; and by "people" the great mass of the other citizens. Now, however, *bourgeoisie* signified the freely elected magistrates, who upheld the freely enacted laws; and *people,* any chance mob, which, in virtue of its sovereign will, chose to transgress the laws. As the latter was chiefly composed of journeymen, we may trace the transition to the present mode of speaking, in which the word "people" means working men, and "bourgeoisie," the rest of the population.

The social question would have given the authorities trouble enough, even without the riots in the Palais Royal.

Private trade had never sufficed to procure for the capital the necessary quantity of provisions; and under present circumstances the state of things had become much worse, because the disturbances in the city had put a complete stop to business. A bad harvest, too, had increased the price of corn, and every town endeavoured to keep its own supply for its own use.[2] But nothing was more certain, than that an actual interruption of the supplies of corn would bring on a terrible outbreak of popular fury; and there was no point with respect to which the new authorities were oppressed by a heavier responsibility. In order to furnish a pound of bread at the usual price of three sous, the town had to buy up considerable quantities of corn at a high price, in foreign countries, and then to sell it cheaply to the bakers. But it was not enough to put bread into the bakers' shops at a heavy loss, the city had very soon to give the lower classes money to buy that bread. As many of the manufacturers had stopped work, a large number of workmen were starving, and streams of vagabonds continued to pour into the city from all quarters. To preserve peace, public workshops were erected on the Montmartre, where 17,000 people received 20 sous a day as wages. The result was the same as in the national workshops of 1848; the majority of workmen only appeared when the weekly wages were paid; and at other times looked out for some different employment, or studied politics in the Palais Royal. The city treasury was all the less able to meet this expenditure, because its best source of income—the octroi—had been dried up, when the *barrières* were destroyed. Recourse, therefore, was had to the Central Government. The National Assembly knew no better means of remedying the

[1] Louis Blanc, who overlooks these powerful causes, and sees in every attempt to stop disorder, a culpable oppression of the people by the bourgeoisie, constantly launches his thunders against the corn usurers as authors of the mischief. *Conf. infra* B. II. ch. 4 for an opposite view of the case.

evil than the publication of the decree of the 29th of August, which proclaimed free-trade in corn, and forbade the exportation of it under the penalty of high treason. This measure, of course, could bring no immediate help; for Necker was confessedly suffering under a terrible deficit, and yet Bailly assured him that if he did not find money a new revolution would break out. The state, therefore, had to undertake the maintenance of the city of Paris. It defrayed the cost of the purchase of corn, on condition of receiving back the produce of the sale. But the need increased continually; and as early as September the city not only consumed that produce, but demanded additional millions.

The government paid a premium to the private traders, for every importation of corn; advanced money to the poorer bakers, and negociated immense supplies in foreign countries. They attained however one object, inasmuch as they were not obliged to live from day to day as in July, but were provided for several months in advance. But money, and again money, was the purport of every despatch which Bailly sent to Necker.

General Lafayette brought in bills of another kind. He was the hero of the day, the darling of the capital, the centre of Parisian politics, and such a position was not to be maintained without dexterity, or without funds.

The general possessed the former in a high degree, and managed to procure the latter. The good-humoured Bailly, who was almost overwhelmed by the troublesome details of his office, was constantly at war with the great council of the commune. Lafayette—who, outside his military sphere, only kept up his influence by secret confidants, whom he possessed in every quarter—was courted by the council in the most marked manner. Immediately after his entrance into office, he organized a police of his own under the direction of Semonville and Talon, which first took Paris under its surveillance, and afterwards Versailles, the court, and the National Assembly. Lafayette possessed in Talon

who was civil Lieutenant of the Cour du Chatelet, a devoted instrument in this tribunal, which had just received from the National Assembly a commission to conduct all political causes. When, lastly, the city also appointed a committee of high police, many attached adherents of the general formed part of it. By all these means he became the real lord and master of Paris, and so infinite was the importance of the capital, that he may be regarded as the third estate of the realm, by the side of the King and the National Assembly. Money, and again money, was needed for all these things; Lafayette therefore drew on the city, and the city on the state. Amid such various labours, commotions, intrigues and tumults, the government had to struggle for existence. "What an administration!" said Mirabeau, "What an epoch! We have every thing to fear, and yet must run all risks. We produce a revolt by the very means we take to prevent it. We have to exercise moderation, at a time when all moderation appears dilatory and pusillanimous; and to show energy, when all energetic action is looked on as tyranny. We are besieged by the advice of thousands, and can only take counsel of ourselves. We have cause to be afraid even of the well-disposed; because restlessness, and excess of zeal, make them almost more dangerous than conspirators. Prudence often obliges us to yield to wrong, to place ourselves at the head of the disturbers of the peace, in order to control them; and amidst the most horrible embarrassments to show a cheerful face." This description is by no means overdrawn, and the authorities well deserved the eloquent appreciation of the difficulties with which they had to struggle. A few weeks after the storming of the Bastille, life and property were once more safe in Paris. There was, indeed, many an uproar before the bakers' shops, and the commissariat committee was often placed in the most harassing difficulties. But supplies were secured for some months in advance; the National guard could be relied upon, and every department of the administration was in

full activity. The Palais Royal was kept down by Lafayette's patrols, and the Orleanist intrigues were frustrated by his secret agents. The debate on the veto, it is true, gave a fresh occasion to disquiet and excitement; and the orators of the Palais Royal once more raised their voices. It was even proposed to march to Versailles, but the mass of the population remained unmoved, and were of opinion that anarchy was worse than despotism.[1]

As long as their leaders saw no occasion to change the watch-words "quiet and obedience," the rioters did not succeed in getting up any important demonstration. Louis XVI. perfectly understood this state of things; and when Breteuil, anxious about the personal safety of the King, entreated him, at this juncture, to change his residence to Metz, or some other place, Louis gave a decided refusal; he knew that the noise of the Palais Royal was powerless, and as he entertained no hostile intentions towards the National Assembly, he could not anticipate any serious danger from Paris. He returned a similar answer to a number of deputies of the moderate party, who had heard of threatenning conspiracies in the capital, and therefore advised him to remove the National Assembly to Tours. Louis was right, as far as the present moment was concerned, but as regarded the future it would have been well not to trust the volcano, and to have listened to Mirabeau as well as Breteuil; for it was just these Parisian intrigues which filled the former with the most harassing anxiety.

We cannot doubt that the wish of the duke of Orleans was either to frighten away the King, or, if he stood his ground in Versailles, to make away with him, and at all events to ascend the vacant throne. Yet the greatest danger did not arise from this quarter; for though, no doubt, his agents at that time guided the rabble, which afterwards stormed the Tuileries and formed the revolutionary army,

[1] Loustalot, Sept. 13th.

yet the National guard was strong enough to hold them in check, and Lafayette was resolved never to allow the duke to take the reins of government. But what if other dangers, of which Louis had never thought, should arise from the midst of these very protectors! To drive the King away, and, still worse, to murder him, was an abomination to the good citizens of Paris; but the very opposite of this, viz. to bring him to Paris—to protect him and make much of him—to separate him from his reactionary court, and to make him a real citizen-king—this idea, which was equally fatal to the independence of Louis as to the plans of the Duke, began in September to flit through many a brain. When the commune had no bread, it was natural to think of the easily accessible civil list; when, on one occasion, the advice of Lafayette was not listened to in the council of ministers, he might flatter himself that the King would hear the wishes of the people more clearly, if he resided in Paris. For a time, however, the temptation was resisted; and when on the 17th September, the French guards—who, since their defection on the 13th of July, had been dismissed from the King's service and had entered the paid companies of the National guard—were also eager to march to Versailles, it was Lafayette himself who pacified them, and reported the matter to the ministry. He pointed, in unmistakable language, to the Duke of Orleans as the centre of all these machinations; and, in fact, the Duke's ambition was once more roused, and his money the main source of the disturbances. In consequence of Lafayette's information, the minister St. Priest induced the town-council of Versailles to send for the Flanders regiment, 1,000 strong, from Douai, as a protection against any such attempts. The number of troops of the line about Paris was thereby raised to 3,600 men; a force, which, though far too small for a *coup d'état*, gave the Palais Royal an opportunity of spreading alarming reports—that the King was going to Metz, and had secured the help of the Austrians, Prussians, Spaniards and Sardinians. There was

not a word of truth in this; but some of the districts, and mobs of workmen, became excited, and wished to go to Versailles. The National guard, however, still remained firm; —the patriots complained of the reactionary bourgeois, and Bailly was indignant at the anarchical intrigues of the Orleanists.

But the 1st of October brought with it an important change in the position of affairs. In the first place it gave the demagogues of the Palais Royal fresh materials for the excitement of the masses. The officers of the Royal body-guard gave their fellow officers from Flanders a banquet in the theatre of the Palace at Versailles, at the conclusion of which the Royal family made their appearance, and were greeted by the officers with an outburst of enthusiastic loyalty; and the meeting broke up, at last, in a state of blissful and noisy intoxication. The tidings of this occurrence were greedily seized on by the Palais Royal. "Marat alone," said Desmoulins, "made as much noise as the four trumpets of the day of judgment." The report was industriously spread among the people that the banquet had been a sumptuous *orgie*,—that the officers had torn the tricolor from their hats—and other lies of the same kind.[1] All the fears of an impending counter-revolution seemed now confirmed; the ferment spread among the people, and the life of a man who wore a cockade of one colour was no longer safe. To this was added the want of bread—which was neither greater nor less than it had been in the summer[2]—and the lately

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[1] The dinner cost 3fr. 75c. a head, Loustalot, *Revol. de Paris*, N. 15. Louis Blanc, states, without giving his authority that the price of the dinner without wine was 26fr. a head; but he then goes on to cite the statement of a Garde-du-Corps, that each of them had paid 7fr. 50c., which exactly agrees with Loustalot's account. The troops which were not in Paris had not yet adopted the tricolor cockade. — [2] Brissot says in the *Patriote Français*: "Il regnait depuis quelques jours cette même disette apparente dont nous avons déjà parlé, mais cette disette n'existait point réellement." The registers of the Cornmarket, Poisson,

decreed dissolution of the great workshop at the Montmartre, which had thrown a large number of unemployed rabble on the town.

The people suddenly discovered that the aristocrats were the sole cause of the dearth of provisions, that it was they who hindered threshing and baking, in order that the people, exhausted by hunger, might fall a prey to their myrmidons. The desire of marching to Versailles was once more roused among the French guards, and it was observed, on one or two occasions, that the men showed less zeal in putting down the rioters. The unpaid National guard, 24,000 strong, still remained uninfected, and their patrols were indefatigable in dispersing the furious mobs. The patriots denounced these troops for blindly placing themselves at the disposal of a municipality which had sold itself to the aristocracy. As late as the evening of the 4th of October, the members of the communal committee repaired to their respective districts to take precautionary measures, that the rioters might not plunder the guard-houses of the National guards and march to Versailles.[1] The posts and patrols were doubled, and the night passed without disturbance.

But at this moment the popular leaders were no longer in a mood to make any serious opposition to a new outbreak of the Revolution.

A few days before, the National Assembly had granted the ministry a new tax; on which occasion Duport declared, that as France owed the summoning of the States-general to the deficit, it was not well to do away with it so soon. An otherwise unknown deputy, Broustaret, reminded the Assembly that most of the *cahiers* wished to hear nothing of new taxes, until after the completion of the constitution.

I. 122, and the official correspondence, between Bailly and Necker on the supplies for Paris, Buchez IV., lead to the same result. Bread cost 3 sous a pound, which remained the market-price in Paris for years. — [1] *Revolution de Paris*, and Gorsas' *Courrier* of the 5th and 6th.

Whereupon Toulongeon, an intimate friend of Lafayette, carried a motion, that previous to the levying of the taxes, the "rights of man," and the articles of the constitution already approved of by the Assembly, should be laid before the King for his acceptance.

The particulars of the discussion on this bill, in the council of ministers, is unknown. But the result is certain enough, that they ventured on no general opposition to it, though they were little inclined to accept it unconditionally; and therefore wished to reserve for the King a criticism of the most dangerous points. The answer of the King to this effect was drawn up on the 4th, and was communicated to the National Assembly, on the morning of the 5th. Louis approved of the decrees in general, but he made certain objections, and reserved to himself the full exercise of the executive power. The Left attacked the royal answer with violence, and at the same time complained of the court intrigues of the last few days. The Right, on the other hand, dwelt on the absence of all proof to support these accusations, and made a motion for inquiry, which, under the circumstances, was rather rash, but which Mirabeau immediately got rid of, by a rather sharp reference to the general suspicions against the Queen. He then sought to confine the discussion to the articles of the constitution, excluding the "rights of man,"[1] but met with no better success than in August. The Assembly did not allow its work to be curtailed, and resolved to insist upon the unconditional ratification of all its decrees.

It was a matter of great importance, at this crisis, that the originator of the "rights of man," general Lafayette, entirely shared these sentiments. He had been informed of the decision of the King, by his friends in the council of ministers, sooner than the National Assembly. He looked on the "rights of man" as the very summit of his reputation, and would not allow one tittle of it to be bartered away.

[1] *Avant-moniteur, Courrier de Provence.*

If the King, he said, should, notwithstanding, subject it to his criticism, he must take the consequences. The general had no intention of exciting an open revolt himself, but he no longer saw any reason for opposing disturbances that might arise without his agency. The Democrats suddenly saw a free course opened to them, and we may imagine with what zeal they rushed along it.

At seven[1] o'clock on the morning of the 5th, before the National Assembly had commenced its sitting, some hundreds of women, and afterwards some thousands, assembled on the Place de Grêve. They forced their way into the Hotel de Ville, cried for bread, and committed every kind of excess; and when at length they sounded the alarm bell, the French guards hastened to join them, and demanded vengeance on the insulters of the National cockade. Another armed concourse formed in the Palais Royal, and a third in the Faubourg St. Antoine, the nucleus of which were the soi-disant victors of the Bastille—a portion of the combatants of the 14th of July—who formed a separate volunteer company of chosen patriots by the side of the National guard.[2]

There is no doubt that its leaders were in the pay of Philip of Orleans, who now hoped to redeem, in the most striking manner, the failure of the 17th of July; and was prepared to pave his way to the throne even by the basest of crimes. The unpaid National guard took no part in the proceedings and gave way on the Place de Grêve, when the women threatened violence, and no orders came from the authorities. In the other parts of the city, however, they were on the very point of interfering,[3] but their leaders no longer shared the sentiments of the men. Just as the contest was about to commence, envoys from the Hôtel de Ville, officers of Lafayette's staff, and popular chiefs, arrived and united in preventing any collision.[4] Meantime,

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[1] *Moniteur.* — [2] Poisson. I, 111. — [3] Loustalot, *Revolution de Paris*, N. 13. — [4] *Moniteur.*

as soon as the tumultuous gathering of the women had begun, Vauvillers, the vice-president of the municipality, had hurried off to Versailles.[1] By ten o'clock on the same morning, he communicated to the ministers the intelligence—at that time utterly unfounded, but useful as a means of intimidation[2]—not that a mere mob, but the National guard, paid and unpaid, accompanied by artillery and crowds of people were on the march to Versailles. He further stated that they were coming—not to demand bread, or vengeance for the insult offered to the tricolor—but to fetch the King to Paris, of which there had been as yet no talk in the capital.

The rioters of the Place de Grêve, whose leaders entertained exactly opposite wishes, knew nothing of this; but at ten o'clock, the very time that Vauvillers was making his report at Versailles, the women under the guidance of Maillard, a lawyer's clerk, captain of the warriors of the Bastille, resolved to march. It was necessary, they said, to liberate the King from the aristocracy, and to get bread from him for the hungry people; and Orleans probably added in secret, that the King must be removed from France, or from the world. Those fatal words "the King to Paris," therefore, which were destined to have so vast an influence on the Revolution, were not first uttered by the riotous women, but by Lafayette's partisans—not by the Palais Royal, or the Orleanists, but by the vice-president of the commune. The ministry was greatly agitated, St. Priest advocated energetic defence—the King wavered—the Queen apprehended still greater mischief—while Cice, Montmorin and Necker—the three ministers who at that time made common cause with Lafayette—declared that with the well-known attachment of the people to the King's person, his residence in Paris would be rather an advantage than the contrary. And thus they came to no decision. In Paris, meanwhile, the National guard assembled in every district. A few companies went to the Place de

[1] Loustalot, l. c. p. 12. — [2] St. Priest, p. CXVIII. —

Grêve, and cleared it of the rabble which, in great numbers, had occupied the space left vacant by the women. By the dispersion of this mob, the Orleanist element in the movement was eliminated; and the Cordéliers and warriors of the Bastille had marched off with them. But the crowds in the Place de Grêve had as yet no definite object; they were uncertain as to the real position of affairs and did not know by what power the knot was to be cut. It was during these very hours that the National Assembly received the King's answer about the "rights of man." This answer was known at the very same time in the Place de Grêve in Paris,[1] and the tumult thereby greatly increased. We have here a clear proof of the extensive preparations which had been made for this outbreak, the ramifications of which must have reached, indirectly at least, even to the council of ministers. Towards noon the "Three hundred"[2] (or general communal council) assembled, and sent a message to the National Assembly to report that the *émeute* was not yet ended, but that no other cause for it was known, than the insult to the cockade, and the want of bread. Immediately afterwards, however, the real ground was strikingly brought to light.

The French guards suddenly called upon Lafayette to lead them to Versailles. The King, they said, must come to Paris, to put a stop to the machinations of the aristocrats, and to make bread cheap in Paris; should he refuse, he must, be deposed, and the general appointed regent for Louis XVII. The Orleanist party had nothing to do with this movement, —by which the report of Vauvillers was realized five hours after it had been made—on the contrary, it ran entirely counter to the wishes of the duke; and the only doubt is, whether it was originated by Lafayette, or produced by the enthusiasm of his soldiers, contrary to the general's will. The former supposition is supported by Vauviller's premature

[1] Gorsas, p. 107. — [2] Protocol of the Commune. Lafayette says falsely, at 9 o'clock.

message, which was entirely false as regards the National guard—by the fact that the royal answer respecting the "Rights of Man" was immediately known—by the opinions of Lafayette's friends in the ministry, and lastly by Necker's explicit declaration,[1] that Lafayette had wished for the change of the royal residence, that he might exercise more influence over the government. On the other side we have nothing but the assurance of the general himself, and the resistance which he made for many hours to the eager request of the grenadiers. He sat on horseback in the midst of them, and declared that he must wait for the command of the commune.

While the soldiers were raging without, the "Three hundred" were engaged for hours in discussing the best means of obtaining bread and corn. Their debate was intimately connected with the great question of the day. Bailly had made, a few days before, very extensive contracts for provisions, but just at this time several of the supplies were retarded; whereupon the National Assembly, on the 2nd of October, had referred a petition for bread to the committees, which, though it was all that they could do, brought no immediate relief to the people of Paris. The minister Necker, since the 1st of October, had ceased to give any answer at all. All these circumstances favoured the scheme of marching in arms to present a petition to the King and the Assembly. The intelligence soon arrived that the women had passed the bridge over the Seine at Sèvres without opposition, and Lafayette now sent off an adjutant, at about four o'clock, to say, that the march to Versailles was inevitable, and that the commune must send him the necessary orders.[2]

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[1] Necker, *Sur la Revol.*, II. sec. 2. "There were," said he, "two currents of opinion in Paris; one party wished to drive the king away in order to occupy his place, and the other to bring him to Paris, in order to exercise influence through him." —

[2] He has himself left two reports of this day's proceedings, in neither of which does he make any mention of this circumstance. It is mentioned in a protocol of the Commune.

The complete programme of the day's proceedings was now brought to light; the committee gave orders for the march, according to Lafayette's wishes, and invested the general with full powers to act as he thought fit. They also appointed commissioners from their own number to accompany him, and to lay the following points before the King, as the wishes of the commune; 1stly, that Louis should allow the duty in his palace to be performed by the National guards; 2ndly, that he should allow the commune to inspect all the documents relating to the provisioning of Paris; 3rdly, that he should give an unconditional assent to the "Rights of Man;" 4thly, that he should choose Paris for his usual residence.[1]

Everything was included in these few sentences—relief of the Parisians from anxiety about their sustenance—confirmation of Lafayette's constitutional principles—transference of the chief power in the empire to the hands of the National guard, and their leader the general.

Inspired by such hopes, Lafayette marched out of Paris; but even now the unpaid guards assembled slowly; many of them did not know what was the object in view; and the general had to wait on the way for several divisions for a long time.[2] After he had passed the Seine at Sèvres he sent word to Versailles that he was coming under compulsion of the guards, and that he would have turned back if he had found the bridge occupied.[3] Yet he caused his troops to proceed from this point in military order, and issued a command that they should force their way through every obstacle which opposed their march.[4]

The women, meantime, had arrived in Versailles at three o'clock, and were throwing every thing into commotion. They filled the hall of the National Assembly, where Mirabeau

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[1] Protocol of the Commune. Lafayette makes no mention of all this, and contents himself with saying that the Commune sent two commissioners to accompany him. — [2] Gorsas, *Courrier*, N. 91 p. 108. — [3] St. Priest, p. CXXV. — [4] Lafayette, IV. 117.

shortly before had vainly begged the president to adjourn the sitting, and to announce to the King, on his own authority, that Paris was marching against him. Maillard delivered a thundering speech to the representatives of the nation, in which he proclaimed the commands of the angry people, and called for vengeance on the corn usurers and the traitorous nobles; while, outside, the masses were carousing at the expense of the Duke of Orleans, and some of their leaders were secretly planning a night attack upon the palace, and the murder of the Queen.[1] A deputation of women went to the King,[2] to beg for cheap bread and undiminished freedom, and returned enchanted with his kindness.

Other portions of the mob, however, were brawling with the King's bodyguard; the position of the palace became more and more critical, and the council of ministers once more assembled. Lafayette's message now arrived, and St. Priest called upon the King to fly forthwith to Rambouillet: "*If*" said he, "you are taken to Paris to-morrow you will lose your crown." Necker cried out: "That is a piece of advice which may cost you your head." The King determined to fly; but when the National guard of Versailles raised difficulties on this point, the court fell back into a state of inactive expectation. The King's unconditional sanction to the "Rights of Man," however, was now announced to the Assembly.

Towards eleven o'clock at night Lafayette arrived with 20,000 National guards. When they heard his drums the Parisian women were at a loss what to think of it, and sent out a patrol to reconnoitre the approach of a possible enemy.[3] The general assured the King that he would maintain order

[1] From the minutes of the Court *du Chatelet*, quoted by Louis Blanc, B. II., ch. 10. — [2] The Prussian ambassador, Goltz, wrote to Lord Auckland on the 12th: "La citoyenne qui portait la parole au roi le soir du 5, est reconnu à présent pour une demoiselle galante, connue et fréquentée par des gens connus. Que d'objets à réflexion!" — [3] Gorsas, p. 107.

at the hazard of his life, and the commissioners of the municipality brought forward their four points. The King assented to the first; the two next had already been conceded, and to the fourth—the removal to Paris—he gave an evasive answer. The National guard then occupied some of the posts in the palace; provisions were procured, and several battalions took up their quarters in the churches, while others bivouacked by their watch-fires in the streets. The mob of women and vagabonds, which had followed the National guard, roamed about among the troops throughout the night. In some streets—especially in the neighbourhood of the palace—these different masses of people collected, and began to talk of storming the barracks of the body-guard, and dispersing the suspected regiment. Towards midnight Lafayette left the Palace, spent a quarter of an hour with the minister Montmorin, and then, although the threatend attack on the barracks[1] had been reported to him, retired to rest, because, he said, all necessary precautions had been taken. No sooner had he disappeared than the barracks were attacked, taken and plundered;[2] at the same time a skirmish took place between the Parisians and a company of the body-guard, in which the latter were driven from the streets, but maintained their posts in the palace.

At last, about 6 o'clock, a patrol of the insurgents found an entrance into the castle unguarded,[3] and immediately forced their way in. The first sentinels of the body-guard were cut down, and their heads severed from their bodies. A deluge of men and women, bearing every kind of weapon, swept through the courts, passages and chambers, plundering and raging, and, with the loudest cries of all, threatening destruction to the Queen. Her antechamber was with difficulty defended by the self-devotion of a few life-guardsmen, long enough to allow of her escaping half naked to

[1] La Marck, I. 116, who was an eye-witness. Lafayette has quite a different chronology. — [2] Gorsas. Toulongeon. — [3] Gorsas, 110.

the King.[1] At last Lafayette appeared—having been roused from his peaceful slumbers, by the intelligence of the tumult—and by the energetic action of the National guard, soon put an end to the scenes of robbery and murder in the interior of the Palace.

But the crowd was raging without and extending itself through all the courts of the building; the cry, "The King to Paris!" was now in every mouth, and the unhappy monarch was obliged to show himself upon the balcony, and announce to the roaring mass below, by gestures of assent, his entire subjection to their will. The imprecations and curses against the Queen, however, still continued, until Lafayette led her, too, forward, and kissed her hand before the eyes of the people. Then the joyful cry was immediately raised, "Long live the general! long live the Queen!" "and from that moment," says Lafayette, "peace was concluded." A few hours afterwards the royal family were on their way to Paris, and were followed in 14 days by the National Assembly.

If we take a general view of the foregoing events, we shall not find reason to believe that Lafayette either foresaw or originated the operations of these banditti on the 6th, which had so nearly ended in regicide. But we can hardly clear him from the suspicion of wishing even at the last moment, to punish the King for his resistance, by subjecting him to a transient terror; and that it was for this reason that he retired to rest, without paying any regard to the rising tumult. He acted in this case as he had done during the whole revolt. He allowed the rioters of the Palais Royal to have their way, and was pleased that they gave him a

[1] It speaks badly for Louis Blanc's historical conscienciousness, that he warms up again the unworthy scandal of Lord Holland about the presence of Count Fersen in the chamber of the queen; a calumny, the groundlessness and impossibility of which was incontrovertibly proved by Croker in the *Quarterly Review*, 1823. *Conf.* Croker's *Essays*, 93.

suitable opportunity of carrying off all the advantage, and yet appearing as a deliverer and a friend of order.

He played his cards cautiously enough to preserve himself for a long time from suspicion; and as he and his friends had now the power in their own hands, they were able to direct the investigation against whomsoever they pleased; and they occupied themselves in this manner during ten whole months. The Duke of Orleans, whose name occurred to every one when evil deeds were spoken of, was especially exposed to suspicion. It was known throughout the city that the mob of women received his money, if not his instructions; and several persons saw him in the palace, on that bloody night, in the very thickest of the tumult.

But the clearest proof against him was furnished several years after his death by the discovery of a letter bearing the date of the 6th October, in which he directs his banker, not to pay the sums agreed upon; "the money," he says, has not been earned—the simpleton still lives."[1] Suspicion was also directed against Mirabeau, whose influence in the Revolution was so mighty, that men considered it impossible for any important act to be done without him. But at the time no further evidence appeared against him, than that he had a general knowledge of what was going on, which, with his connexions, was natural enough; and we have now documentary proof that he regarded the movement, from the very commencement, as a public misfortune. This was known to Lafayette, if to no one else, and when the preliminary enquiries were completed, and the matter was ripe for judgment, the general promised Mirabeau to bear witness to his innocence. But on the appointed day, the general did not show himself in the National Assembly,

[1] Ducoin, *Philippe d'Orleans*, 72. From a communication of the imperial minister of Police, Real: "Courez vite, mon cher, chez le banquier, qu'il ne délivre pas la somme; l'argent n'est point gagné, le marmot vit encore." *Conf.* also the very particular and positive statements in the "*Correspondence of Lord Auckland*," II. 365.

and Mirabeau spoke with severity and bitterness of the unbridled ambition of the new dictator. When their common friends blamed this outburst of anger, Mirabeau wrote a letter to his confidant, Count la Marck, which he gave him full permission to show to Lafayette, and in which he says: "Yesterday, I could have stamped upon Lafayette an indelible stain, which I had hitherto reserved for history. I refrained from doing it; I drew my sword, but did not deal the blow. Time will do this in my stead, but if he wishes me to hasten the period, he has only to commence the contest by the slightest attack."

We confess, for our own part, that we have no doubt what the judgment of history ought to be. Neither the disgusting riot of the women, nor the treacherous attack of murderers on the palace, were the important events of the 5th of October. The question of how far the money of the Duke of Orleans, and the ambition of his friends, were at work in this affair, is one rather of criminal than of historical interest.[1] The pregnant occurrence of the day was the subjection of the King to the revolutionary forces of the capital. Lafayette had previously entertained this

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[1] Louis Blanc, B. II., ch. 7 and 10, B. III., ch. 8, endeavours to show that the Comte de Provence, (Louis XVIII.,) and Mirabeau, as his agent, got up the conspiracy. The evidence he brings forward proves nothing more than that the prince had shewn hostility to the Queen on several other occasions, and that in November 1790 he had plotted against Bailly and Lafayette. It is inconceivable that Louis Blanc should connect a letter of the latter date with the Favras affair of Nov. 1789. Of the Prince's proceedings on the 6th October 1789 he has absolutely nothing to report, except that he visited the Queen in full dress in the morning. The relation in which the Prince stood to the Queen, has been much more accurately explained by Count Vieil-Castel, *Marie Antoinette et la Revolution Française*, than by Louis Blanc; and it had been previously treated of by Guénard, *Histoire de Madame Elizabeth*, and by Goncourt, *Histoire de Marie Antoinette*. With regard to Mirabeau, we may refer the reader, in answer to Louis Blanc's conjectures, to the entirely decisive documents in La Marck's correspondence.

wish, and it was in his immediate circle of friends that the idea of bringing the King to Paris had first found expression, in the message to Versailles, on the morning of the 5th. It was under his influence, too, that the municipality, which was devoted to his interest, passed the above-quoted resolutions at mid-day. His adherents proposed the removal to the King, and it was not till after his arrival in Versailles that the same cry was taken up by the mass of the people. Lastly, it was he and his friends alone who reaped the advantage of this event, until a new revolution awarded them measure for measure.

For a brief space, indeed, the men of the Palais Royal thought that such a movement of the popular masses, as had on this occasion crowned their efforts with success, would consolidate for ever the rule of the street orators. But the Commune, which had attained all its objects, and held in its hands the King with his civil list, the ministers, and the National Assembly, suddenly stopped in their career. As early as the 18th of October, they issued a severe injunction against the abuses of the press, which excited the most venomous bitterness in the Palais Royal. It was reasonably asked, by what right the militia, in their new uniforms—who were just as much creatures of the Revolution as the pike-men of the Faubourgs—began all at once to preach quiet and obedience. No other conclusion could be come to, than that Lafayette's power was founded solely on the Revolution, and that his love of power was his only reason for putting an end to the Revolution.

They continued therefore to stir the revolutionary fire, got up another bread riot, and, on the 21st, cut off the head of a baker. But it was immediately seen which, for the moment, was the stronger party. The Commune without delay caused the murderers to be arrested, and called upon the National Assembly to proclaim martial law against insurrection. This measure had been already proposed by Mirabeau at Versailles, without effect, but was now passed by a large

majority. The streets of Paris were now for the first time quiet.

The Duke of Orleans, who had hoped to pick up a crown in the *émeute*, allowed himself to be driven by Lafayette, one may almost say, with blows, into decent exile to London; so that Mirabeau, judging of the Duke's conduct by his own sentiments, cried out "And this man was to be my King! why, I would not take him as a servant!" It was all over for a long time to come with the Orleans party.

But when Mirabeau further proposed to grant to the ministers all the means for the establishment of a strong government which they should point out, the ministers themselves declared, that in the present general uncertainty they could not undertake any responsibility. There was no prospect of introducing any thing like order into the affairs of the kingdom, for the very groundwork of law was utterly destroyed. The government continued in its former state of impotence, and the actual rule was exercised by Lafayette, by means of the National guard of Paris. These, for the moment, had the greatest power in the capital, and Paris ruled the kingdom. It was a sovereignty of individuals, a rule of universal suffrage, a direct popular government; it was, in a word, the incarnate theory of the rights of man and the universal right of insurrection. The first-fruits of this state of things had fallen to the Parisian *Bourgeoisie*, as the nearest and strongest party; and they were at liberty to enjoy their victory as long as they possessed the physical power to defend their booty against the next assailants.

CHAPTER V.

ADMINISTRATION.—ASSIGNATS.

Mirabeau enters into relations with the court.—His plan of a liberal government.—Hopeless state of the finances.—Talleyrand demands the church property for the state.—Mirabeau calls for a parliamentary government.—Consequences of his failure.—New administration.—Enfranchised citizens.—Communes, departments.—Non-voters, Jacobins.—Reform, administration of justice.—First steps towards the sale of church lands.—Interference of the city of Paris.—Confiscation of all the property of the church.

Only one man among the statesmen of France at this period had a thoroughly clear perception of the position of affairs above described.[1] Mirabeau understood that the Left—which, from fear of the nobility and military, was always endeavouring to extend anarchy—was furthering, not the natural development, but the annihilation, of the representative system. He saw that the Right—which, from fear of anarchy, was always urgently insisting on the restoration of the *ancien régime*—was giving the *coup de grace* not to rebellion, but to authority. That a feudal state was now an impossibility, and that every attempt to restore it would be suicide on the part of the government, was a conviction which had been for years the mainspring of all his actions. He had felt the abuses of feudal despotism in his own person; he had thoroughly tracked out its hectic weakness in every sphere of politics; and it would be difficult to say whether he most hated or despised it. But that which gave animation to his

[1] The main source of the following facts, which have been hitherto very imperfectly known, is the correspondence between Mirabeau and la Marck.

wrath, and a preeminent superiority to his schemes, was the lucid clearness with which the form of the future France, with all the details of administration, appeared before his mind. Whilst he was rousing the people to an overwhelming attack upon King Louis and his ministers, he never for a moment lost sight of the rights which it was necessary for the monarchy and the government to possess. As early as July he said to Count la Marck, an influential friend of the Queen, "See that they take me for what I am—a friend rather than an opponent." In September, his penetrating insight into men and things, and his perfect knowledge of the state of Paris, enabled him to foretell the disasters of October. He saw how the government was always helplessly wavering, forfeiting every means of influence, and alternately behaving towards the Assembly with mean servility, or bitter animosity. "Do these people then not see," he cried, "the abyss which is being dug at their feet, and into which they must sink without hope of rescue? The mob of Paris will scourge the corpses of the King and Queen; every thing depends upon their taking a clear view of their own position." It was in these days that he struggled against the "Rights of Man" as the grave of order, and contended, in the name of freedom, for the unlimited veto of the King. These were the days in which he shook Necker's groping and tentative administration by a crushing blow against the *caisse d'escompte*, whilst he wrested from the reluctant Assembly the income tax, proposed by the same minister, as the last and only means of salvation against national bankruptcy. On the 29th of September, he brought forward a motion to allow the King's ministers to take part in the debates of the Assembly. It was immediately supposed that he was thinking of himself as future minister, and his motion was deferred for the time to make way for more urgent questions.

Men were so accustomed, at that time, to connect his name with all the successful blows of the Revolution, that Mirabeau was generally regarded as the chief originator of the

affair of the 6th of October. But, in reality, scarcely any one saw so clearly the ruin which would flow from this source, or the means of remedying it. On the 7th of October he exhorted the Count la Marck to tell the King, that his throne and kingdom were lost, if he did not immediately quit Paris again; and that he himself was prepared, without delay, to point out the means of doing so. When he indicated the immediate influence of the popular masses on the government and the legislation as the very heart of the danger, he exactly hit upon the very spring of all the subsequent devastation caused by the Revolution. When he drew up a detailed memorial of the measures to be adopted against that danger, he sketched, with a master's hand, the enduring institutions which France owed to the Revolution.

He wished to remove the King from Paris, because he wished to liberate him from every other influence but that of the National Assembly; with which he thought the King should be indissolubly united.

He did not wish for any restoration of aristocratic privileges, or of the feudal system, the destruction of which he considered to be irrevocable. He wished that the King himself should anticipate the Assembly, by decreeing the destruction of the Parliaments and the judicial Noblesse. He wished that the King should claim for his court exactly what was necessary, and no more; and establish the principle, that the public revenues were only intended to promote the common weal, and the security of the national credit.

Mirabeau saw no other possibility of salvation for the King than his entering upon such a course, and identifying himself with the great interests of his people. Above all, he warns him against fleeing to the frontier, and by connecting himself with the *Emigrés*, or foreign countries, rousing the whole nation to arms. He calls upon him to exercise prudence and despatch; but roundly declares the present Ministers utterly incapable of executing his plans. He therefore demanded that a trustworthy, gifted and liberal man,

should be found to carry out the scheme; and that he should be entrusted with full and unlimited powers.

At the same time he discussed the question of reconstructing the Ministry with men of all parties—with the more influential members of the National Assembly—with the eldest Brother of the King, the pliant, reserved and cautious, yet ambitious Count of Provence[1]—and lastly, though much against the grain, with Lafayette himself. But here lay the difficulty; for Lafayette considered the present state of things all that could be wished; the King obeyed him from fear, the ministers were entirely subservient to him, and he might well consider himself Regent of France, without the burden of business attached to that office, or the dangers of responsibility. He did not yet confess to himself that it was not the Parisian National Guard that obeyed his commands, but he that followed their whims. He was still in the full enjoyment of his new popularity, and above all things he had attained the highest wish of his heart, in not being obliged to bow his head before any superior. Was it likely that he would agree to the formation of a strong ministry? The necessity of it he was, to a certain degree, compelled, during the discussion, to confess; but to invest another with such functions would destroy his sovereign influence; and to undertake the task himself, would, at the same time, put

[1] *Conf.* observation to Page 104. The correspondence with la Marck exhibits every phase of these negotiations. Mirabeau first came into connection with the Prince by means of la Marck; for a time he thought of making the Prince prime Minister, then again he wished to appoint Necker to this post, and he then makes use of expressions which point to a Stadtholdership of the kingdom. But before the end of the year Mirabeau declares that the miserable character of the Prince rendered it impossible to employ him in any way.—The passage in the correspondence I. 448, which Louis Blanc supposes to refer to a change of sovereign, can certainly only be understood of the nomination of the Prince as Prime Minister; and there is not the slightest doubt of the spuriousness of the alleged treaty between the King and Mirabeau copied by Louis Blanc, B. III., p. 363, in the Leipsic edition.

his ability to the test, and endanger his popularity. The same motives operated still more strongly on the other leaders, who already envied Lafayette his power, and in other respects lived in a sphere of like capacities and views as the general himself. From the very commencement, the conferences afforded but little hope of success, but were, nevertheless, continued for some weeks. The formation of a government, alike popular and strong, was the object of all Mirabeau's efforts. It must be strong, he said, to save France from utter ruin; and it would be strong, as soon as it showed ability and activity, and resolutely turned its back on the sacrifices of the 4th of August.

In this every thing is comprehended, for Mirabeau did not confine the popular, modern, or liberal element by any strict definition of principles, or any particular form of government; its characteristic mark, in his eyes, was rather the liberation of the national life and the state, from the bonds of individual privileges and monopolies,—i. e. the emancipation of the religious conscience from the dicta of a privileged church—of labour from the trammels of the feudal lords and the guilds—of capital from the monopoly of the bourse and the metropolis—of law and justice from the exclusive possession of seigniors and parliaments—of finance from the privileged selfishness of the court nobility—of the civil administration from the hereditary transmission of saleable offices —and lastly, of national unity from the shackles of inland duties and provincial privileges.

Since these principles render every other rule impossible but that which tends to the public good, they may be said to form the true liberty of the individual, and the true character of a representative state. A change in the form of government is only a consequence of these principles, though indeed a necessary one. The reforms here mentioned render it essential to bestow extensive rights upon the representatives of the people; not as an innate original right of every human being, but as absolutely indispensable to the

welfare of the state. For, by the abolition of ancient privileges, the crown, especially, obtains such an increase of power, that without the participation of popular representatives in levying taxes, and enacting laws, a complete despotism would arise. Even with this participation, the King—as head and controller of the new administration—would possess a greater power than ever.

In accordance with these views, Mirabeau was preparing to bring forward a series of laws, not one of which contained a single word on formal constitutional questions, but which would, by the creation of a strong government, have sufficed to give consistency and duration to the constitution. The first of these laws had in view the protection of life from the sovereign caprice of individuals. Immediately after the 6th of October, therefore, he proposed a martial law which was severer in all its provisions than the one which was afterwards enacted, but more liberal, since it only extended to the precincts of Paris. With his practical insight, he saw that the lever which set in motion the whole empire lay in Paris alone; and while he seized upon this with a vigorous hand, he wished to spare the provinces the unnecessary terrors of a military display. In order to restore an effective government, he needed, in the next place, a large financial measure; for no government, under the very best of constitutions, could preserve its equilibrium, when hampered at every step by the fetters of debts and deficits. A violent revolutionary movement here came to his aid; and he ventured to make use of it to promote the ends of good order.

The state of the finances was of course a hopeless one. If Breteuil's ministry had not let loose the storm of anarchy—if Necker had possessed the energy to take in hand the reform of the finances, immediately after the 23rd of June—sufficient resources might have been discovered. The clergy had at that time determined to offer their estates as a guarantee for the national debt; at that time, too, a redemption

of the tithes, equally advantageous for all parties,[1] might have been carried out; according to which the clergy, perhaps, would have been able to take upon themselves the interest of a portion of the national debt; and lastly, it was a matter of course that the nobility and the church would thenceforward contribute to the regular taxes; and the amount of their contribution—rather more than 30 millions—would at that time have been an effectual support to the treasury. As the estates of the church represented a capital of nearly 2,000 millions, these resources would have been more than sufficient to pay the interest on, and to consolidate, the whole amount of the floating debt, and the sums borrowed for a certain term, as they fell due—now about 620 millions—and to place the tottering property of the state upon a sure foundation.

All this was possible in June, if the government had taken the lead in reforms, and thereby upheld the external peace and order of the state, which are the primary source of all credit. When this opportunity was lost, and the very existence of the state was at stake in July, the financial condition naturally became worse.

On the one hand, the amount of the floating debt was increased by the extraordinary expenses of the Revolution; 103 millions had been spent by the end of the year, and Necker estimated the outlay under this head for 1790 at 90 millions more. Again the Government was compelled, by the stagnation in the receipts, to defray the current daily expenses with the funds which were intended for consolidation and amortisation. All branches of the financial administration were mixed up together, and order and arrangement vanished entirely from the management of the Treasury.

Necker, moreover, although at that time at the height of

[1] As the collection of the tithes cost more than 30 millions, the tithe-payers would gain 20 millions by the redemption, which would raise the income of the Church 10 millions of francs.

his popularity, adhered to the system of palliation and concealment. On the 7th of August, he asked for a loan of 30 millions, payable under the future legislature at the will of the lender, and bearing interest at five per cent. This was a reasonable rate of interest, since at the low price of the old State bonds, every purchaser could get from 6 to 6½ per cent on his investment. But the incompleteness of the information which Necker gave concerning the state of the treasury misled the National Assembly to fix the rate of interest at 4½ per cent, whereupon the loan completely failed. Three weeks later, they were obliged to grant 5 per cent for a credit of 80 millions, and, in addition, to burden the state by unfavourable collateral conditions, and in the end to be glad to raise a sum of 33 millions in ready money. They were again obliged to have recourse to the *caisse d'escompte*, for new advances, with which the treasury was able to make shift till the end of September. Then, however, Necker declared that no loan could be raised, even at the most exorbitant interest; and that if bankruptcy was to be avoided, an increase of the taxes was indispensable. He proposed therefore a tax of 25 per cent. on all the income of the country, to be paid within three years, according to the individual tax-payer's own valuation. This was the above-mentioned occasion on which Mirabeau brought his triumphant eloquence to the aid of the Minister. He had just applied, what he considered an irresistible lever for the overthrow of Necker, he hoped by new remedies to relieve the financial malady of the state, and he did not wish to see it collapse in bankruptcy before the beginning of his treatment. He therefore vehemently and successfully urged the Assembly to grant the tax.

This was something for the future, but brought no advantage for the moment, except that the *caisse d'escompte* was thereby induced to make new advances, the greater part of which had to be employed in paying old ones.

That which Necker had not had the courage to declare

on the 5th of May, came, every day, more clearly, and more threateningly, to light. The burden of the floating debt was the source of all financial embarrassments, and the alleviation of that weight was the great object of all financial operations.

It was at this juncture that Talleyrand, on the 10th of October, brought forward his all-important motion, to claim the property of the church for the necessities of the state.

That there was no injustice in the proposition *per se*, the clergy, as we have seen, themselves confessed. Out of a yearly income of 100 millions from tithes, and 60 to 70 millions[1] from the produce of their estates, they had hitherto paid—and that not very regularly—a tax of from 3 to 4 millions. They had, moreover, very insufficiently provided for the poor, and the instruction of the people, the care of which had been entrusted to the church. Both the property and the credit of the clergy were in excellent order, and they had, therefore, the obligation and the means to help the state in its necessitous condition. The only doubt was, as to the manner in which aid should be given; and here the disadvantages of the revolutionary condition became again apparent. While in June the clergy might have supported the credit of the state, without any disturbance of their own rights of possession, this was now impossible, in consequence of the annihilation of that credit; nor would the heated passions of the people have been any longer contented with what the clergy had once freely offered. All the hatred felt towards the Established Church advanced full sail to the attack, borne upon the roaring tide of triumphant popular opinion. Voltaire's abhorrence of every thing ecclesiastical was widely spread among the educated classes; the Jansenists shouted with grim joy at the prospect of paying off the Romish Church for all the injuries they had suffered; and the supporters of the rights of man would not hear of the existence

[1] According to others 80 millions. In the 100 millions of tithes, the cost of collection—above 30 millions—is not included.

of so powerful and aristocratic a corporation. Thousands of men were almost glad that the distresses of the Treasury afforded an incontrovertible argument for putting an end to the class privileges of the Church, by the immediate confiscation of its goods. The service of religion, they said, had only suffered injury from the princely wealth of the prelates; while the necessities of the State seemed to them for ever relieved by 2,000 millions' worth of property. Mirabeau did not share in the passionate fury against the Church, which found vent in these demands upon it. He had no other sentiment towards it than utter indifference; since he considered it outstripped by modern civilization, and therefore regarded its internal dissolution as inevitable. "Pray let the clergy sleep," he said to his noisy colleagues, when they were always seeking new quarrels with the Church. At a later period, he wrote to the Queen, that the Nobility was not to be destroyed, as long as family feeling existed in mankind; but that the Church had irrecoverably fallen. But he well knew what deep roots it still had in the land, and was all the less inclined to hazard certain victory over it, by outward deeds of violence. When therefore the Assembly had, notwithstanding, recourse to such deeds, he told his friend Mauvillon, that this was the most poisonous of the many wounds the country had received. With these sentiments he could not feel much inclined to appropriate the credit of the material seizure of the Church lands, and still less the monstrous proceeding of their actual sale. If he aimed at the improvement of the finances, as a means of restoring order, law and credit, it was evident that such a violent confiscation would only lead him directly away from his object. The storm, however, which threatened the Church, came very opportunely, even for him, because he needed for the execution of his plans the power of disposing of its property.

A consolidation of the floating debt having now become impossible, it was necessary to find means to liquidate at

least a portion of it. By the advice of a Genevese emigrant, named Clavière, Mirabeau tried the plan of issuing treasury-notes, with which the public creditors might be paid instead of money. In the ruined condition of its credit the State could not expect to keep so large a quantity of paper money in circulation, without some special guarantee. The Church lands were, therefore, to serve as a mortgage, and in order to keep this security free from the previous confusion, it was proposed to entrust the administration of the National debt to a new Board, entirely unconnected with the Ministry of finance. In accordance with these views, Mirabeau brought forward a motion on the 12th of October, that the National Assembly should declare the estates of the Church to be the property of the nation.

It was not difficult to find objections to this system. Paper money, from its very nature, can only be the fruit of a sound credit, the activity of which it tends to develope; but it is entirely unfitted to restore a shaken confidence, just as it would be a manifest contradiction, if a bankrupt debtor should try to regain the confidence of his creditors by new promissory notes. Many voices, therefore, were immediately raised to prophecy all the subsequent evils caused by the *assignats;* and Mirabeau was afterwards charged with being the originator of those evils. But to do him justice, we must consider his measures in the connexion in which they were brought forward; and observe, that the creators of the subsequent system of paper money had recourse to *assignats* in order to spare themselves the task of restoring order in the finances, while *his* only object was to gain breathing time for the formation of a strong government. Twice did he take a decided step in the direction of paper money; but, on both occasions, he acted with a conviction that these new resources would be entrusted to a powerful controlling hand.

No sooner had the National Assembly declared, on the 2nd of November, that the property of the Church was at

the disposal of the State, than Mirabeau rose to bring forward a motion, on which more than on any other depended the future of France. The Ministerial negociations mentioned above had taken a favourable turn. Lafayette seemed won; his friends Talon and Semonville zealously joined Mirabeau; Cicé, the Minister of Justice, declared himself ready to give up Necker; and the King was induced to promise Mirabeau an official position of some kind or other. Under these circumstances, Mirabeau brought the following propositions before the National Assembly; that the peace of Paris should be secured by large purchases of corn; that the administration of the National debt should be entrusted to a distinct board —which, he said, would put into circulation paper notes resting on good security, and thereby effect the liquidation of the arrears;—and lastly, that the King's Ministers should have a deliberative voice in the National Assembly. By these last words, as every one understood, Mirabeau announced himself as a candidate for the Ministry.

With the powerful connexions which he at that time possessed, he looked for opposition only from the extreme Right and the extreme Left. The former abhorred him, as the leader in every work of destruction; the latter already regarded him with suspicion as the restorer of order; and both justly looked upon his victory as the grave of their own future. Mirabeau gave firmness and consistency to the real blessings of the Revolution, by eliminating its anarchical elements; and this gave him a title to the hostility of both Right and Left. But though Duport and Robespierre united with Maury and Espremenil, they were far from having a majority at their disposal. If the court should influence the more judicious members of the Right, the Minister of justice the ministerial party, and Lafayette the deputies of the left centre, Mirabeau was certain, by his influence and oratory, triumphantly to carry with him the great mass of the house. But on the last night, the aspect of affairs entirely changed. Mirabeau always maintained at a later period, that it was

Necker who took the decisive step; Lafayette tells us that the Minister of justice was busy on this occasion, but that he himself was a passive spectator. The difference is by no means essential; the main point is, that Necker's influence against Mirabeau was not counteracted, but rather supported, by Cicé and Lafayette. The relative strength of the opposing parties was hereby entirely changed. On the 6th, the Left carried an adjournment of the division; on the 17th the Assembly, passing over the other propositions, decreed that no deputy could be a member of the Ministry. All the eloquence with which Mirabeau pointed out the general perversity of this decree, and the fact that it was directed solely against himself, was of no avail. He spoke to an audience which had pre-judged the matter; and the monarchy was sacrificed to the maintenance of the insecure and transient power of Necker and Lafayette.

In saying this, we are not exaggerating; for the monarchy was at that time helplessly bleeding to death of the wounds received on the 6th of October.

The doctrine and practice of anarchy had gained such strength in France from that day, that to establish any government at all, was a colossal undertaking, for which the National Assembly alone possessed the necessary strength; and even this body, only by a right use of the means at its command. No government but a parliamentary one was possible in France, at the time of which we speak; and that such a government is compatible with monarchy and national welfare, is proved above all by the example of England. Parliament influences the government by its leaders becoming the counsellors and agents of the king; and being thus secure of its power, the parliament has no interest in hindering, circumscribing, or weakening the government in details. Under this system the king has not indeed, in form, the overruling power to which the monarchs of the Continent are accustomed; but he has as splendid and influential a position as any potentate in the world; since as a factor of the legislature—

as the fountain of honour and nobility—and as head of the Ministerial Council—he is called upon to make his influence felt as far as possible in accordance with his own judgment and capacity—with the laws of the land, and the necessities of the times. The limitations of his power are, in fact such as an absolute monarch—if he is but wise and just—imposes on himself; such as Louis XVI. had long been accustomed to in his dealings with his Ministers. He who almost without any will of his own, had hitherto accepted his counsellors at the hands of his Aunt, or his Prime Minister, the Queen, or a faction of the nobles, might just as well receive them from the Assembly, if he had no reason to suspect that body of enmity to the Crown. At the present moment this enmity was shown, not by forcing unwelcome ministers upon him, but by refusing to give him any ministers at all. By forbidding the appointment of any Deputy to an office in the ministry as a danger to liberty, they openly branded every minister of the King, and therefore the King himself, as an enemy of the nation. By refusing that indirect influence over the heads of the Government, which forms the focus of the English constitution, the Assembly announced that perpetual interference in the details of the administration which must, in the end, be fatal to the existence of the Monarchy. For there is no alternative; where a strong Parliament exists, the Ministry must either proceed from, or be in all respects subject to it. The decree of the 7th of November, therefore, condemned the Crown to absolute nullity in the administration of affairs; and as a Parliament cannot carry on the government directly, and the existence even of a dishonoured Throne made the appointment of any other Executive impossible, anarchy was henceforward legally established in France.

The results of the decree of the 7th of November became apparent in a few days—we might almost say, a few hours—after its promulgation. At the end of September, Thoure had made his first report on a new division of France, for

the purposes of election and administration. Debates on this subject were carried on, almost without interruption, during the whole winter; and each act, as soon as it was passed, was sanctioned by the King and brought into operation; and thus at the commencement of the Spring the new state of things was completely inaugurated. France was divided, without any regard to the provinces, into 83 Departments, and these again into 574 Districts, and 4730 Cantons. As far as possible these partitions were made according to natural boundaries, and were generally equal in extent or population. All previously existing connexions or separations were abolished, with the exception of the parishes, which could not be destroyed, and the attempt to fuse which into larger communities or *communes* had no result. At any rate their old constitution was done away with, and they were all constituted on the same system as Municipalities. Of these parishes there were about 44,000, in which 4 or 5 million enfranchised citizens wielded the Sovereignty of the French people. In order to be admitted to this supreme privilege, the citizen must be of age, must have resided one year in the district, and pay some direct tax. These last conditions caused great discontent at the time, and were, indeed, manifestly inconsistent with the "Rights of man," which acknowledge no political difference between man and man, but that of virtue and talent. There was an evident inconsistency in trying to introduce into this system any privileged class. The democratic journalists again raised a cry against the despotism of the *Bourgeoisie*, and replied to the exclusive privileges of property, bestowed by this law, by a direct declaration of war against all *proprietaires*. "If this decree is maintained," cried Loustalot, "it will lead to an agrarian law, and a general division of property." This displeasure had, however, no practical foundation or importance any where but in Paris, where the proper army of the Demagogues forfeited the suffrage for want of a domicile. The number of four million voters shows that in general the law contained

a very insignificant limitation of universal suffrage. It was, moreover, soon afterwards decided that every one should pay the direct tax which constituted a voter, who earned any thing more than the lowest rate of daily wages. On this principle every handicraftsman and operative would be enfranchised, since they all earned higher wages than the lowest class of workmen. Regarded as a whole, it would be impossible to imagine a more perverse system; for while it connected the franchise with a certain income, and thereby necessarily inflamed the wrath of the destitute against property, it virtually placed the chief political power in the hands of the poor and needy.

The four million voters were forthwith armed as a National guard. Every *Commune* had its battalion, or its company, in which the citizens chose their officers without any interference from above. The laws for the maintenance of discipline in the National guard were not enacted until later; and were even then of a very insufficient kind; thus far, the guards obeyed their officers as much as they pleased; and according to the law of August 1789, the officers were responsible to no one but the municipal authorities. The municipal offices, again, were filled by the direct vote of the citizens, without any higher influence; and the officials thus created had not only the administration of the communal affairs, but some highly important functions of executive government; *e. g.* the drawing up the lists of taxpayers—the rating and collection of the state taxes, to be raised by the commune; and, lastly, they had the uncontrolled disposal of the military power, both of the National guard, and the troops of the line which happened to be present. Properly speaking they were only empowered to issue orders to the latter force when public order was concerned; but, as no superior authority could effect anything in opposition to the *Commune*, the latter soon proceeded to give directions respecting the organization and movements of the troops in garrison among them. We see from this, how

well founded was the saying, current at the time, that France consisted of 44,000 little Republics. The Cantons were nothing more than divisions intended to facilitate the more important electoral operations, and had no administrative significance, or official representatives. We may consider the Districts and Departments together, since they were entrusted with exactly the same functions, and the District authorities were the acting representatives of the Departments in their smaller sphere. At the head of each District were 12, and at the head of each department, 36 men, some of them acting as a Directory for the transaction of current affairs, and a larger number as a Council for settling the taxes, and enacting administrative regulations. They had to distribute the state imposts, in the Districts and Municipalities, to watch over their collection, and to hand over the sums raised to the Exchequer. They had to make and maintain the roads—to manage the street police—to administer the finances and public institutions of the District, and lastly to give orders to the Gensd'armes. They were appointed, without any interference on the part of the Ministry, for the space of two years, by electoral colleges, whose members were appointed by the voters of the District, according to their respective cantons. They could only be deprived of their office by a judicial sentence; nor could they be translated or promoted. A proposition of Mirabeau's, that no one should take office in a District or Department, who had not served in a subordinate position, was rejected.

The constitution ordained that they should execute their functions in the name of the King, and carry out all his commands which were in accordance with the law. If they neglected to do this, or themselves committed illegal actions, the King had the right to annul their orders, and to suspend them from office. But even in such cases, the matter was brought before the National Assembly, which could either cancel or maintain the suspension, or deprive and impeach the culpable authorities. We need not point out that under

such circumstances the authority of the central Government, which neither appointed the Office-bearers, nor exercised any influence on the regular routine of business, nor had any power of awarding either reward or punishment, must have been virtually null. The same relations existed between the Departments and the Municipalities, and even between the Municipal authorities and the individual citizens, when once the former had lost the favour of the National guard. Every where the real power lay in the lower, and the weakness in the upper spheres of this administration. To this was added the excessive number of Magistracies—for from the very beginning no one knew exactly what purpose the District administration was to serve. The great number of members in each, moreover, rendered all rapidity of execution impossible; and notwithstanding the wretched pay given to each member, the whole machine was extremely costly. It was reckoned that one person out of every 34 in the kingdom, was an official. Thus pretty nearly every body was called upon, and well inclined, to command, and no one to obey. At first the masses of the people took part with great zeal in the new arrangements; but before long the very men who possessed the greatest knowledge of affairs, and were most interested in them, found that in the general tumult and confusion they could effect nothing, and therefore withdrew in terror and disgust. The ambitious, the needy and the factious, remained masters of the position, and the result was almost the greatest misfortune which can befall a nation, *viz.* that not only the policy of the general government, but all the daily and local interests of the whole country, were at the mercy of political factions. The great mass of orderly citizens, whose wishes and necessities in ordinary circumstances exercise, by their very existence, an almost irresistible influence under every form of government, lost all political power in France.

On the other hand, the orators, the writers, the meetings, and the clubs, occupied the public attention; and by their

means the non-voters were enabled to make up for the loss of the suffrage.

The press was entirely free, and was subject to no kind of legal check. Its power grew with the number of its organs; with nine-tenths of the Frenchmen of that period, whatever was printed was an authority, and, if it flattered their passions, a power. A journalist, whether a voter or not, had more influence than any elected authority. Whenever an angry article appeared in a popular newspaper, Mayors and Directors, Generals and Ministers, hastened to send in their apologies and justifications. This floating power in the State had its formal organization in the clubs. The right of association was as unlimited as the freedom of the press; and the absence of all public authority made the exercise of this right an absolute necessity to the orderly citizens, as a kind of self-defence. The National Guards of neighbouring towns united for defence and offence, and the citizens of whole Departments and Provinces formed alliances against the enemies of order, property and freedom. The system of association attained a greater consistency and a more dangerous activity, when it came to be employed by political parties. The first impetus in this direction came from Paris. The Breton club after its removal from Versailles took up its quarters in the monastery of the Jacobins, and thenceforward began to enrol even those who were not members of the Assembly. Its numbers soon increased to thousands; it founded a journal of its own, and soon established affiliated clubs in the provinces. All these were connected with one another, and with the mother club, by constant correspondence, and an interchange of visits by means of deputations. The chief towns of the Departments formed centres for their Districts; in every club there were a few initiated persons, who had placed themselves at the absolute disposal of the chiefs in Paris, and who took care to recruit equally passive tools in every Section of the District. At the end of 1790 the number of Jacobin clubs was

200, many of which,—like the one in Marseilles—contained more than a thousand members. Their organization extended through the whole kingdom, and every impulse given at the centre in Paris, was felt at the extremities. Beneath the official Government, which, notwithstanding the number of its members, displayed nothing but impotence and confusion, there grew up spontaneously a real and living power, full of zeal, discipline, unity and energy. It was far indeed from embracing the majority of adult Frenchmen, but even at that time it had undoubtedly become—by means of its strict unity—the greatest power in the kingdom. It counted members among both voters and non-voters, in the National-Guards, and in the troops of the line. But its own proper and ever ready army was, incontestably, composed of the destitute and restless class, which was neither humanized by education, nor checked by prudential motives. Having nothing to lose, they were prepared with light-hearted bravery for every sacrifice, every danger, and even every crime; and could only expect from every fresh revolution an improvement of their lot. It naturally followed that the chief aim of the Jacobins was to satisfy these their troops, and, in the first place, to flatter their passions—their hatred, and their vanity; and then to still their hunger and gratify their avarice. The tendency of the most powerful union in the kingdom, therefore, was opposed to the security of property, the recognition of personal rights, and the refined forms of social intercourse. The way was now opened to the establishment of the despotic power of the mob. In the year 1790, indeed, this object was far enough from being attained, since the voters had the exclusive possession of all official rights. But even then the conclusion could not be controverted, that when the Jacobins had a more powerful organization than the Government, the non-voters would be stronger than the voters, notwithstanding their exclusive suffrage. Here, too, the general principle of the constitution,

which placed the real power as low in the social scale as possible, bore its natural fruits.

The decrees for the regulation of the new Government were completed, as we have already said, in February 1790, and were partly brought into operation in the previous January. It is not to be wondered at, that excitement and disorder continued and extended[1] in every direction; although the National Assembly, on the 16th of February increased the severity of the martial law. The old authorities disappeared, and the creation of new ones filled the land with violent election contests. The validity of a large number of the elections was disputed, and not unfrequently two Magistracies were chosen side by side; and several hundred complaints respecting such cases were sent up to the National Assembly. The peasants renewed their quarrels with the nobles, and in Bretagne bands of 1200 men might be seen marching against the chateaux. In Champagne and Lorraine the people refused all feudal services, even those which had not been abolished on the 4th of August. The collection of taxes, which during the winter had begun in some places to proceed more smoothly, came once more to a standstill, to the bitter vexation of Necker, as we shall see here after. Even the indirect taxes were no longer paid, and every attempt to collect them proved dangerous to the tax-gatherers; in Bezières, for example, the people hung five of them, on one day, before the eyes of the frightened authorities. When the matter was brought before the National Assembly, Lafayette said that the Constitutional Committee ought to propose a law, which would suffice to check disorder, and yet not endanger freedom. The King himself appeared to recommend energetic measures; his liberal promises excited enthusiastic applause, and the whole

[1] That the anarchy had never really abated since the summer of 1789 is evident *e. g.* from a notice in the Moniteur of Nov. 27th which reports as an almost incredible fact that peace and order had been preserved in the small town of Sézanne without the necessity of appealing to arms.

Assembly took an oath to be faithful to the nation, the law and the King; but the only result was a high-sounding proclamation to the people, which had not the least effect. The Right proposed to authorize the Ministers to call out the troops against the insurgents; the only answer to which was violent indignation at a proposal so fatal to freedom.

Instead of passing any such measure the Assembly was continually employed in weakening the authority of the king, and therefore of the Government, by destroying his influence in the department of Justice, as thoroughly as in the Civil administration. This tendency seems all the more deplorable in this case, because the legal reforms were in other respects as judicious as they were beneficial. A sufficient number of experienced judges and advocates had seats in the Assembly to prevent such great technical blunders being made, as previously in the civil administrative system. With regard to the starting point of legal reforms, it had long been decided that the provincial Parliaments must be abolished. The sale and inheritance of offices had already been proscribed on the 4th of August; the political position of the Parliaments was one which could answer no reasonable object, and their judicial services were not of a nature to inspire respect. On the 3rd of November the National Assembly resolved, on the motion of Lameth, that the Parliaments should make holiday until further notice; and that their business, meanwhile, should be transacted by their so called *Chambres de Vacance*. When the Chambers of Rouen, Metz and Rennes, protested against this measure, they were arraigned before the National Assembly by the Ministers themselves, violently threatened by the people, and immediately sought safety in speedy submission; in three short debates the fate of these ancient corporations, which more than once had proved a match for the royal power, was completely decided.

The compensation money of 350 millions, which was to be paid to the incumbents of offices, was a heavy burden

for the moment, and it was easy to see that the new administration of justice would be far more costly to the Government than the preceding one. It was impossible to offer to the future Magistrates, who were only to pass judgment, and that without any kind of dues, the trifling salary which a parliamentary counsellor had joyfully accepted, because his position was hereditary, and brought him fees and political influence. A people like the French, indeed, would cheaply buy the benefits of good law at an annually increased expenditure of 20 millions. And we may observe, in general, that the feudal State which paid its officials with privileges, was more cheaply, but worse served, than a Representative Government which pays its servants and retains its prerogatives.

A full reformation was more urgent in the judicial than in the administrative department, because the latter was at any rate represented by the old municipalities, while the former had no organ at all. The feudal courts, the royal tribunals, and the judicial chambers of the Parliaments, had all been equally proscribed by public opinion; and certain as they were of their impending dissolution, they all wanted the power and authority to manifest any kind of activity. The negociations however were extended to October 1790; during the whole Spring and Summer France had virtually no courts of law; and we may easily judge how greatly this circumstance must have contributed to the increase of insecurity and lawlessness.

At the end of April the National Assembly decreed, before any thing else, the introduction of juries in criminal cases. In civil causes they rejected the violent propositions of the democratic party, after listening to the explanations of the practical lawyers Thouret and Tronchet, who with luminous conciseness proved the impossibility of separating the question of law from the question of fact, in civil procedure. The same voices which proclaimed their dislike to the formulæ of scientific jurisprudence, and aimed at a beau

ideal of free arbitration, in accordance with a natural sense of equity, likewise opposed the principle of appeal, as leading to a useless multiplication of burdensome and costly forms, a purposeless increase of the numbers of the Government officials, and all the evils of red-tape. The irresponsibility of the judges, which was once an indispensable barrier against the despotism of the Government, was still more violently resisted, because it seemed to threaten the new liberties of the people with a still more dangerous kind of despotism; there was, moreover, a general dislike to place any kind of influence in the hands of the Government. It was in vain that Cazalès exerted himself to defend the appointment of the judges by the King, whose power, he said, they were demolishing step by step, and thereby destroying the unity of the empire. In the midst of the greatest excitement, and the triumphant shouts of the people, the Assembly passed a resolution on the 4th of May, that the judges should be chosen by the people from among the professional jurists, for a term of six years. For the civil procedure, an inferior Court was formed in every district, and these were mutually to serve one another as Courts of appeal; and lastly a Court of final appeal was established in Paris. In every Department, there existed a Court of criminal jurisdiction, and in Paris a Court of Cassation, from which likewise the members of the National Tribunal were to be appointed by lot to try cases of *Lèse nation*. Cazalès called upon them first of all to decide the nature of this crime; but Robespierre was of opinion, that the only requisite was, that the Court should consist of the friends of the Revolution; inasmuch as its task was to combat the aristocrats, the enemies of the people, and punish those who corrupted its moral life. These considerations had so great an effect, that no further notice was taken of Cazalès' motion; and the choice of the judges, both of the Court of Cassation and of the National Tribunal, was entrusted to the enfranchised citizens in all the Departments. The King

was to appoint a Commissioner in each Court, who was to watch over the interest of the State in the course of the proceedings, and to provide for the execution of the sentence; but the office of public accuser was likewise filled up by the votes of the enfranchised citizens. If we examine these arrangements, with regard to the number, the gradation, and the competence, of the newly created authorities, and compare them in these points with the old state of things, the superiority of the former is great and striking. To their other advantages were added the publicity of the proceedings, the introduction of counsel for the defendant, the abolition of torture and *lettres de cachet*, and, finally, the creation of *juges de paix*, tribunals of commerce, and family tribunals. If once the Government succeeded in filling the new offices with suitable persons, the gain would be immense. There is no department in which the favourable side of the Revolution is so strikingly seen, or so clearly distinguishable from its mistakes and faults. The blessing of the sudden emancipation of the peasants could, under the circumstances, hardly be purchased without revolutionary excesses; but the degradation of the King was so far from being necessary to the attainment of a good administration of the law, that the latter suffered under every blow which was aimed at the royal authority. It is true that the National Assembly, by its decrees, had advanced nearer to its object, of creating a monarchy without a king, or a king who might easily be dispensed with. He could neither appoint a village bailiff, nor watch over the operations of a justice of the peace, nor remove a clerk for neglect of duty. The voters, or their representatives, composed the juries and elected the judges; just as they bore arms, and appointed the office-bearers in the general administration. The same party which chose the Director of the District also designated the District judge—the former for two, the latter for six years;—and both were equally impregnated by party spirit, equally dependent, and equally divested of all dignity and self-re-

liance. This one circumstance threw the whole progress of reform into jeopardy. No doubt the old Parliaments were imperious and selfish, and rotten at the core; but they were, at any rate, independent, and, in the full sense of the word, sovereign Courts. France was soon to discover that her new judges hid their faces before every turbulent mob, and were as impotent as the new administrative authorities.

Thus the hopes with which the clearsighted friends of freedom—and Mirabeau the warmest of them all—had hailed the downfall of the *ancien régime* were blighted, and succeeded by bitter disappointment. We shall see hereafter how his indefatigable mind sought new methods of repairing the ruins that lay around him. At the moment, perhaps, nothing pained him more deeply than that, in the general destruction of his system, one fragment of it was alone preserved—viz. the decree respecting the estates of the Church—which, in connexion with the rest, might have had a beneficial effect, but by itself was simply destructive. This decree was maintained, and if any one of the numerous enemies of the Clergy had wished to forget it, the financial distress was more than sufficient to recall it to his memory.

Necker made no progress; he continued in his old courses, without lifting a finger for the restoration of order, which was the most essential pre-requisite for an improvement of the finances. He contented himself with wearying the Assembly by exhortations to gentleness and harmony, instead of binding them to himself by creative ideas. His only resource seemed to be the *caisse d'escompte;* and when its sources began to dry up, he proposed to restore its credit by a guarantee on the part of the State, and to turn it into a National bank. In this case, he said, it would be in a condition to issue new paper money and make loans to the Government. But as the State had still less credit than the *caisse d'escompte*, this scheme was either hopeless or fraudulent, and certainly not sound enough to avert, by the financial prospects it offered, the daily increasing storm which threatened

the property of the Church. The desire of celebrating a grand triumph of mental enlightenment, and at the same time acquiring a solid security for the desired paper money, would admit of no delay, and was to be checked by no consideration. In accordance with these views, a report on the state of the Exchequer was brought up from the Finance Committee by Montesquiou, a nobleman, like many others in the States-General, of superficial attainments, and splendid exterior, neither a miracle of virtue, nor a great criminal, a revolutionist from ambition, but of aristocratic tastes, and capable of treating all subjects with equal shallowness. His report was a masterpiece of self-complacent frivolity. In the same breath it announced a debt of 950—instead 600 millions—as already fallen due, and a surplus of 33 millions in the revenue; it made no objection to a new loan from the *caisse d'escompte*, but demanded 400 millions from the Clergy. Necker could only carry a few modifications of little importance, and on the 19th December the sale the Church lands to that amount was decreed. From the proceeds of this sale a special fund was to be formed, to which the claims of the *caisse d'escompte* were to be referred. The preliminary steps for the execution of this decree were immediately taken. It was necessary to separate from the entire property of the Church an extent of land of the value of 400 millions which was most conveniently situated for immediate sale by auction. The Ecclesiastical Committee of the Assembly undertook this business, while Necker made a temporary shift with the bills of the *caisse d'escompte*, and the patriotic contributions—put off the State creditors—deferred the payment of pensions, and renewed the *anticipations* which had fallen due. Embarrassments of this nature were continually increasing; for the new authorities of the Communes and the Districts were now established, and their *début* redoubled the disorder in the Provinces. The Committee, therefore, had good reason to accelerate its operations, and declared, on the 6th of February, that the first step to be taken—"a step not merely

harmless but advantageous and glorious"—was to break up the monasteries. The other property of the Church, he added, ought not to be touched, until the religious services which would have to be endowed from this source had been re-modelled according to some general plan. This statement was not very encouraging to the Clergy, since it held out the prospect not only of a confiscation of their property, but also of a reform in the Church. The very first objection however which they made roused a violent storm. All the dislike entertained against the Church culminated in an angry contempt for the monastic system. The popular masses were excited to the utmost; the secresy of the cloisters appeared to them to conceal nothing but tyranny, suppressed suffering, corrupt debauchery and crime of every kind. "The incarceration of a human being for the whole of life," said the orators, "is unnatural; and such a desecration of the dignity of man must no longer be tolerated on the emancipated soil of France." The Clergy raised the cry of blasphemy, and the Bishop of Nancy put the question to the Assembly, whether they still considered the Catholic faith as the established religion of France. But he was only answered by derisive murmurs; his motion was rejected as informal, and it was decreed, in accordance with the report of the Committee, that the monasteries should be dissolved and their property sold. It was hoped that an annual pension for the 2,000 persons connected with the monasteries —in all about 16 millions—would be easily gained by the operation.

This was all very well for the future, and the more secure the final result appeared to be, the less could the public understand why Necker would not use these resources for his present wants and issue bills upon them. But he clearly saw on what dangerous courses they were now entering with thoughtless presumption; he knew that if they had recourse to the convenient system of paper money, without having founded the security of the National credit on a firm basis,

the very largest issue of paper must be soon exhausted and the necessity arise of another on a still greater scale. It was certain that France would be quickly flooded with a mass of *assignats* continually decreasing in value, and the whole nation thereby involved in the bankruptcy of the State. It was, moreover, still very doubtful whether the State would in the end gain much by the confiscation of the Church property, since it would have to bear the expenses of the re-modelled Ecclesiastical Establishment. The more zealous calculated that the estates in question had hitherto yielded 70 millions per annum; and that as estates in France usually sold at 33 years' purchase, 2,300 millions might be expected from the sale. If therefore State securities bearing 6 or 7 p. cent were bought with this sum, the State would be freed of at least 130 millions of annual interest; so that the gain would be very considerable, even though the Church should be splendidly endowed with, say, 100 million francs per annum. Unhappily, however, there were serious errors in this calculation. In the first place, of the 70 millions yearly income, about twenty belonged, partly to the knights of Malta, and partly to schools and hospitals, which in everybody's opinion ought to keep their property. In the next place, a great part of the remaining 50 millions was not the rent of landed estates, but of plots of ground in towns, State papers, and private claims. The valuation therefore at 33 years' purchase was certainly too high, and since the immense amount of land thrown upon the market would necessarily depreciate its value, there was every reason to suppose that the produce of the sale would not be more than 25 years' purchase—*i. e.* 1250 millions. In this way, then, the State would only be freed from 80 millions of yearly interest, and a profit in this colossal operation could only be gained by reducing the expenses of the Church below this amount. It was easy to see that a reduction on so large a scale could hardly be made without endangering the internal organization of the Church, and that thus a

religious schism would be added to all the secular disorders. But the Left, far from thinking this an evil, regarded it as another blessing of the Revolution; and every where proclaimed their views with impatient eagerness.

Necker had political and economical experience enough to foresee the consequences of these proposed measures, and made one more attempt to avert the calamity. He informed the Assembly, on the 6th of March, that he should need, in the course of the year, about 250 millions[1] in addition to the regular revenue; but that he should be able to raise nearly the whole amount by various means—as surplus income, fresh *anticipations*, delay of payments, and, lastly, a final loan from the *caisse d'escompte*. It is true that several of these items were very questionable; and he himself, after 3 days, was obliged to raise the amount of the loan from 30 to 60 millions; moreover, he only spoke of the current expenditure, and the *anticipations* which were due, without mentioning the unpaid dividends and overdue capital of the National debt. Yet it was not in consequence of these omissions that his plan fell to the ground; we have already learned, that neither the National Assembly nor the Minister cared very much about a handful of figures more or less. There were other decisive reasons why he did not, at this time, meet with the same favour as had been shown to his operations with the *caisse d'escompte* in the previous December. The principal reason was that the impatience, both of the Assembly and of Paris itself, to deal the decisive blow against the Church, and to take possession of its property, had risen to the highest pitch. There was, moreover, an extraordinary impulse in the same direction in the capital, which is too characteristic of the whole state of things to be passed over without notice.

The city of Paris was suffering under the same pecuniary

[1] He says 294, but has on the credit side assets to the amount of 38 millions.

difficulties as the State; its receipts were equally interrupted and irregular, and here too the *caisse d'escompte* had to advance the entire cost of all branches of the Administration, and, when that was done, to promise 2½ millions a month, in ready money. Under these circumstances, it seemed to the Municipality the greatest good fortune that the 6th of October had made them the real possessors of all power and rule in the kingdom. When the proletaries have nothing to eat, they make a revolution; and as the State wishes for no more revolutions, it must provide the proletaries with food. By this pithy syllogism they extorted from Necker, in the two first months of the winter, 17 millions for the purchase of corn, and 360,000 livres a month—far more than the entire monthly budget of the city in former times—for the wages of the workmen in the public workshops, which had been in full activity since the 6th of October. The Royal Civil list was laid under contribution to an equal extent with the public treasury, and it is no exaggeration to say that the monthly consumption of national property by the people of Paris, amounted to several millions.

But in this case too, it was impossible to fill the yawning abyss which anarchy and disorder had opened. It seemed as if every new payment only created fresh wants. The real sovereign of the State, therefore, the Municipality of Paris, could not possibly allow a question so popular and promising as that of the Church lands to pass without making it contribute towards the progress of the Revolution, and at the same time securing special advantages to themselves from the operation. On the 10th of March, therefore, the Mayor of Paris appeared at the bar of the Assembly to pourtray the perilous state of the national credit, to point out the necessity of a speedy sale of church lands on a large scale, and to promise the ready help of the Municipal authorities. Paris he said, had estimated its own monastic property at 150 millions, and was ready to purchase it all, to sell it again, and to be satisfied with a quarter of the proceeds for

the troubles and dangers of the operation. This would have been a commission of nearly 40 millions, for which, added Bailly, the city would build the Assembly a beautiful palace. But this was too much even for the Assembly, usually so accommodating to the city of Paris; and so much was said that Bailly declared that there had been a mistake, and lowered the terms to 16 millions. To this no opposition could be made, and it was decreed, on the 17th of March, that Church property to the value of 400 millions should be made over to the Municipalities of the kingdom, who were to re-sell it in smaller portions, and keep $^1/_{16}$th of the net proceeds for themselves.

Paris thus gained a very handsome profit, and the way was paved for the actual confiscation of the estates of the Church. Great progress was now made in all directions. First of all it was proposed, that 400 millions of paper money should be immediately issued by the state. These *assignats* were to be received as purchase money at the retail sale of the ecclesiastical property, and till then bear their full nominal value in all transactions. The Minister of finance would employ the 400 millions in discharging his obligations to the *caisse d'escompte* (170 millions), in paying the *anticipations* which fell due in the course of the year (158 millions) and lastly half the unpaid dividends (81 millions). Thus far men might console themselves with the thought, that the greater part of these sacrifices were rendered necessary by the *ancien régime*, and that after the withdrawal of the bills of the *caisse d'escompte* the quantity of paper money could not be considerably increased. But unfortunately it was already evident that the 400 millions would only be a starting point. For, after they had been spent, there still remained the old debts of the respective ministries, (120 millions) the second half of the unpaid dividends, and 72 millions of over-due capital—in all 273 millions—from former times; and the Committee itself declared, that the liquidation of these items must be seriously taken in hand.

Including the profit for the cities, it took about a third of the Church lands to raise the 400 millions, and it became urgently necessary to provide for the salaries and the debts of the Clergy. The Financial Committee also emphatically dwelt on the necessity of giving a new form to the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; and lastly, the Committee explained to the Minister, that if the *assignats* set him free from 140 millions of *anticipations*, he would have 10 millions surplus at the end of the year. But it was not difficult to see that in this calculation, they reckoned upon the raising of 50 millions of very uncertain revenue, and an excessive limitation of the most necessary expenses. Under these circumstances, it was a matter of course that they could not stop at a sale of lands, and an issue of *assignats* to the amount of only 400 millions.

The Ecclesiastical Committee therefore brought forward their own motion, side by side with that of the Committee of Finance; and proposed that the nation should take upon itself the debts of the clergy (149 millions), and defray the costs of the Church from the taxes.

For the present the existing dignitaries of the Church were to remain as before, but their revenues were to be so much curtailed that the Church would cost 133 instead of 170 millions. But as this sum was still too large, they proposed that in future the Church should be arranged on an entirely new system, so that 65 millions (afterwards raised to 77 millions) would suffice for its maintenance. The old Dioceses were to be done away with; every Department was to form a Bishopric—every half square league a Parish—and the parish priests were to be better paid than before.

No one could conceal from himself the importance of the crisis into which France was thrown by these propositions. The Clergy strained every nerve; their most influential representatives made urgent appeals to the sense of justice, the interests, the political wisdom and religious feeling, of the National Assembly. The Archbishop of Aix, who had

formerly been the chief advocate of the union of the Clergy with the *tiers état*, and had subsequently become the highly honoured President of the States-general during the jubilant victory of the 14th July, offered 400 millions as a voluntary offering of the Clergy. This sum was to be raised by a mortgage on their property, the interest of which was to be paid by themselves, and was to be ultimately liquidated by gradual sales. Cazalès set before them, in a violent speech, the constant insecurity of *assignats* based upon lawless plunder—the impotence of the Ministry, which rendered any improvement in the national credit impossible—the fluctuations of the ever-growing mass of paper money—by which every individual, rich and poor, would be dragged into the general bankruptcy, and the mass of the people driven by every movement in the money market to insurrections caused by hunger and despair. "How great is the folly of these capitalists," he cried, "who, excited by the hopes of the first speculations in the new paper money, urge you on with such reckless haste!—do they not see that *all* kinds of property receive a fatal blow when any *one* has been destroyed?"

But the majority were unalterably fixed in their resolution, and firmly maintained the advantages they had won. Since the 27th of June—it was urged in reply—a separate order of Clergy no longer existed; how, then, could they still make an offer of 400 millions? Since the 2nd of November, the property of the Church had been placed at the disposal of the nation; what member of the Assembly, then, had a right to raise a legal protest when the nation was carrying out that decree? The financial difficulty pressed hard upon them; the hope of gain allured many an individual, and the Municipality of Paris had no intention of giving up their booty. The majority thought that the fate of the whole Revolution was imperilled if an order of men, whom they regarded as the born enemies of all enlightenment, and all reform, were left in possession of their independent wealth. They did not see the possibility of expunging the lay Aristo-

cracy from the Constitution, if the ancient Aristocratic Church were allowed to remain in existence; and they hoped, by means of the *assignats*, to bind the whole French people by material ties to the fate of the Revolution. What objection could be raised on the plea of religion, if the State paid for the services of the altar, better than had been done before, and only removed the princely pomp from a Church whose founders had made the poverty of the Apostles a proverb? At present, they said, the greed of the priests, the self-conceit of the clergy, and the lewdness of the monks, were in every mouth; and to proceed with the utmost severity against this degraded corporation would be the duty of an emancipated people, even if the improvement cost as many sacrifices, as it really promised blessings.

The longer the discussion lasted, the more decidedly did these feelings manifest themselves. "I shall speak no more," said an Abbot—"every thing has been already settled in private cliques;" whereupon a good honest soul, the equally pious and democratic Carthusian, Dom Gerles, rose and declared that this was a calumny which ought to be immediately refuted by the Assembly; and he proposed, that a declaration should be made that the Catholic faith was the religion of the French people. A stormy debate ensued; on the Left, they cried that the fact was not called in question, and wherefore should they make it a subject of formal decree, unless they wished to give the signal for a new persecution of heretics? The Clergy asked, in their turn, whether if the fact was acknowledged, the refusal to proclaim it did not betray a bitter hatred against religion? On the side of the Right, Estourmel reminded the Assembly of a vow of Louis XIV., to keep the cities of France in the Catholic faith. Upon this Mirabeau sprang up and said that he too remembered a Catholic King, and could see from that very rostra the window from which the hand of a French Monarch —guided by an abominable faction, which mingled their worldly interests with the sacred interests of religion—fired the shot

which began the massacre of St. Bartholomew! Thus abuse and insult flew from side to side, and the cry resounded from the galleries, "Down with the cowls! down with the priests!" Outside the Assembly the people were collected in crowds, who threatened to drag the nobles and the clergy out of the Assembly; saying, that they were not chosen by the people, but only representatives of abolished orders, and consequently unqualified intruders; and that if they voted wrongly they were not inviolable like the genuine Deputies. At the close of the sitting, the National guard had to protect several Deputies against the attacks of the mob.

The Assembly decreed, on the 14th and 17th of April, the payment of the Clergy and the expenses of divine worship by the State—the confiscation of all the property of the Church—an immediate sale of it to the extent of 400 millions, —and the fabrication of an equal amount of *assignats*.

BOOK II.

FIRST EFFECTS OF THE REVOLUTION ON EUROPE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL CONDITION OF CENTRAL EUROPE.

CONDITION OF CENTRAL EUROPE.—EPOCHS OF AUSTRIAN POLICY.—UNIVERSAL DOMINION OF THE HOUSE OF HAPSBURG.—FEUDALISM IN AUSTRIA FROM 1648.—SEPARATION FROM GERMANY.—DECLINE OF THE POLISH CONSTITUTION.—ANTAGONISM OF POLAND AND NORTH GERMANY.—THE PRUSSIAN STATE.—FREDERICK THE GREAT.—THE HOUSE OF LORRAINE AND STATE-UNION IN AUSTRIA.—JOSEPH II.—RESISTANCE OF PRUSSIA.

WHILE the first year of the Revolution was shaking the French State to its very foundations, the extraordinary spectacle it presented attracted, it is true, the lively attention of foreign countries; yet the anxious regards of European statesmen were only directed in a very inferior degree towards Paris. The policy of the rest of Europe revolved almost exclusively round another Revolution, almost equally violent with that which was going on at the same time in France, and in many respects analagous to it; but differing from it in this, that it was begun by a crowned head, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Joseph II. of Austria. His efforts had so deep an influence on the history of Europe in the period of which we speak, that it is necessary to consider them more closely, and for this purpose to retrace our steps a little.

The House of Hapsburg attained its European position through the Emperor Charles V. Before his time the Princes of this House had conducted themselves like most other German Sovereigns—attending chiefly to their dynastic interests—active, though not self-sacrificing, in promoting the welfare of their dominions, with views confined by the ho-

rizon of the German world, and under no temptation to prefer foreign to domestic connections. In the 15th century, however, this condition of affairs was changed. Inheritance and marriage brought the House of Hapsburg, in rapid succession, the reversion of the Magyar-Slavonian-Hungary, of the half French Burgundy and the Netherlands, and, lastly, of Spain, half Italy, and the immeasurable Indian discoveries. Charles V. in possession of so many dominions, scattered over half the globe, and of claims to at least as many more, obtained the Imperial Crown of the Roman Empire, and with it the ancient title—acknowledged both by Roman heathen and Mediaeval christian—to rule the world. His position therefore was raised far above that of a mere national chief, and the interests of his person and dynasty were bound up in the task of obtaining universal dominion. As he himself belonged to several nations, and really to none,—being German on his father's, and Spanish on his mother's, side, but Burgundian in education and opinions—their national prosperity was not the object of his life, but only a subordinate means to the great end of spreading the rule of the Hapsburgs over East and West. This ambition had several times brought him into conflict with the Pope, whom he had alternately reduced to obedience by warlike and ecclesiastical measures. This was not done however from any transient sympathy with religious freedom or the independence of the State, but had merely been a question—as in the struggles of the middle ages—which of the two potentates, in the vast theocracy of Christendom, should hold the first place. As soon as the Pope submitted the Church to the will of the Emperor, the Emperor was ready to subject the world to the Church.

These efforts form one of the most splendid points in the history of our quarter of the world, and are indubitable proofs of extraordinary intellect, creative imagination, and an indomitable will. But nature, which has made one nation to differ in character from another, will not allow her crea-

tures to be used as tools of human ambition. It is the fate of such extravagant projects to destroy themselves by choking the sources of their own strength. All the nations over which Charles V. ruled had to learn by experience that his position, as ruler of the world, was injurious to their prosperity; and no nation felt this so early or so deeply as Germany. As regards religion, this assertion needs no further proof; but in political matters also its truth was most clearly displayed. The wars with the Turks in the East, waged with German blood, had but little result even for the Emperor himself, and none at all for the Empire. The Italian conquests in the South brought no advantages to Germany, but to Spain; and in the West, where Charles exempted the Netherlands from almost all interference on the part of the Imperial authorities, he confirmed the declaration of the Duke of Lorraine—that he was not under the suzerainty of the Empire,—that the Netherlands might have a friendly neighbour. It was in strict accordance with this system that Charles at length subjected the German Protestants by means of Spanish, Italian and Hungarian troops; and their fresh revolt under the Elector Maurice, was caused, not by the desire of religious freedom alone, but, quite as much, by the wrath with which the whole nation, in spite of all Imperial edicts beheld the Frenchman Granvella, and Alba the Spaniard, lording it in the German Empire.

The idea of the universal dominion of the Hapsburgs was, of course, considerably weakened when Charles divided his splendid inheritance, and gave Spain, India and Naples, as well as the old imperial possessions,—Milan and the Netherlands—to his son, and the German and Hungarian provinces to his brother Ferdinand, his successor in the imperial dignity. The latter, and in a still greater degree his son, Maximilian, now began to pay greater attention to the interests of Germany; but the common family feeling was still alive in them, and the fatal religious troubles which ensued rendered the feudal and dynastic view of things once more

triumphant. There was, at that time, in Germany, both among Catholics and Protestants, a moderate and a violent party; and whoever retained any attachment to Empire and native land must have wished to see the two moderate factions united, on the ground of a mutual recognition of each other's religious faith; and this was just the object of the above-mentioned Emperor. Now it is certain that faults were committed on both sides, and that the Protestant radicals took their full share in the destruction of this prospect of harmony. Equally evident, however, is the inveterate and savagely persecuting spirit of the Catholic zealots; and this party had no more devoted or ardent adherent, than the future Emperor, Ferdinand II. Here too, as in the case of Charles V., national feelings gave way before the interests of the dynasty and the Catholic world-empire. While he was still Archduke he offered his Spanish cousin the Swabian territories of his House, in order to give him a continuous dominion from Milan to Brussels; and as Emperor he began the Thirty years' war, by a comprehensive alliance with Poland, Italy and Spain; which the Protestants answered by invoking the aid of the Danes, Swedes and French. For a whole age the very existence of the German name was imperilled.

The issue of the contest was the complete overthrow of the Hapsburg claims. The peace of Westphalia acknowledged the equal rights of the Protestant churches, and the sovereignty of the German princes. And thus, on the one side, an end was put to the mediæval dominion of the Church, which would have needed exclusive rights for its existence; and on the other side, feudal imperialism lost its rule in the Empire, because its ambition could not be satisfied with guiding the destinies of the German nation. The House of Hapsburg had to seek other channels for its policy. It is true that recollections of former plans repeatedly rose in the Imperial mind; and, as late as the year 1725, an offensive and defensive league was made with Spain

against the Turks and the Protestants, for the furtherance of a family object. Yet, however zealously catholic the Emperors remained,—however little they saw things from a German point of view—they were obliged, after all, to yield to circumstances, and to exchange the desire of universal dominion for more limited aspirations. A period of specific Austrian policy now commenced.

Before the Thirty years' war the territories of the German Hapsburgs were not very considerable. The greatest part of Hungary was in the hands of the Turks; the Tyrol belonged to a collateral line; and, in the other provinces, the independence of the Nobility was much stronger than the sovereignty of the Archdukes.

The Nobles were all zealous protestants, so that a monarchical power could only be created after a victory of the Catholic faith. For the first time since 1621, the crown was seen in these regions to assume a really dominant position. Efforts in this direction had been zealously carried on since 1648; the Tyrolese Estates now lost their most important privileges; and, above all, the Emperor succeeded, by the help of Polish and German troops, in driving out the Turks from Hungary, and at the same time crushing the national freedom of the Magyars with frightful bloodshed. By these victories the Monarchy gained, in the first place, a large increase of territory—which placed it nearly on a level with France. In the second place it acquired at home the power of raising as many taxes and soldiers as were necessary to increase the army to the extent of its wishes; and of distributing its officials and troops—without distinction of nation—as imperial servants, throughout its dominions. And thus it secured submission at home and disposable strength for its operations abroad. Here it stopped short. As it had no national, and, consequently, no warm and natural relation to any of its provinces—which were merely used as passive tools to promote the lofty aims of the Hapsburg family—the Government had no intention of using its power

at home for the furtherance of the public good, or the building up of a generally useful Administration. The Nobility had no longer the strength to resist the demands of the Crown for men and money, but it still retained exemption from taxes, the jurisdiction and police among its own peasants, and a multitude of feudal rights, which, often enough, degraded the peasant to the condition of a serf, and everywhere bound down agriculture in the most galling bonds. Of manufactures there were little or none; trade was carried on on the system of guilds. The State officials exercised but little influence over the internal affairs of the Communes, or Provinces; and the privileged orders had full liberty to prosecute their own interests among their inferiors with inconsiderate selfishness. In this aristocracy, the Church, from its wealth and its close internal unity, assumed the first place; and its superior importance was still farther enhanced by the fact of its being the chief bond of unity between the otherwise so loosely compacted portions of the Empire.

In modern States Provinces are more especially bound together by similarity of language, education and material interests; and these are respectively represented by the organs of Law, Instruction, Administration and popular Representation; by means of which the National Unity makes itself felt in every part of the country. The military force only appears in the back-ground, and only acts in case of public disturbances. But of these peaceful and endearing means of influence Austria at that period possessed none; it was only by the army that she could enforce the orders of the central Government. It was, therefore, a matter of the most urgent necessity to add to the military force a more peaceful and persuasive agent. This necessary aid was offered, quite spontaneously, by the Church, whose wars under Ferdinand II. had really founded the Monarchy. The Church attached the Nobility to the Government; for we must not forget that a very considerable portion of the estates of the Nobles had passed into the hands of new possessors who

had received them as a reward for being good catholics. The Church, too, taught all the youth of the Empire,—in all its different languages,—obedience to the House of Hapsburg, and received from the Crown, in return, exclusive control of the national education. It formed, in spite of the resistance of nationalities, a sort of public opinion in favour of the unity of the Empire; and the Crown, in return, excluded all non-catholic opinions from the schools, from literature and religion. Austria, therefore, continued to be catholic, even after 1648; and by this we mean, not only that its Princes were personally devout—or that the Catholic clergy were supported in the performance of their spiritual functions,—or that the institutions of the Church were liberally supported—but also that the State directed its policy according to ecclesiastical views, made use of the Church for political purposes, and crushed every movement hostile to it in all other spheres of the national life. In Austria, therefore, it was not merely a question of theological differences, but of the deepest and most comprehensive points of distinction between the mediæval and the modern world. Austria was still, in its whole nature, a Mediæval State or Confederacy of States.

The consequences of this condition were most strikingly seen in its relation to Germany.

In the first place, there was a complete separation, in regard to all mental and spiritual matters, between the great body of the Empire, and its powerful Eastern member. This was the period, in which Germany was awaking to a new intellectual life in modern Europe, and laying the foundation of its modern science in every branch—in History and Statistics, Chemistry and Geology, Jurisprudence and Philosophy —and assuming by its Literature, an equal rank with other nations in national refinement and civilization. By the works of genius which this period produced Austria remained entirely uninfluenced; and it has been said, that Werther had only been made known to the Viennese in the form of

fireworks in the Prater. The literary police allowed no seed of modern culture to enter the Empire; and the Jesuit schools had rendered the soil unfit for its reception. All the progress of German civilization, at this period, was based on the principle of the independence of the mind in art and science. The education of the Jesuits, on the contrary, though unsurpassed where the object is to prepare men for a special purpose, commences by disowning individual peculiarities, and the right of a man to choose his own career. There was, at this time, no other characteristic of an Austrian than an entire estrangement from the progress of the German mind. The case was the same in the department of public law as in those of literature and science. The Imperial dignity, which continued to be maintained by Austria, was nothing more than a means for the furtherance of the dynastic objects of the House of Hapsburg. Under Charles V. the possession of the Imperial crown had extended the horizon of the Monarch far beyond the national soil to the limits of the world itself. But now this crown had shrunk into a mere organ for governing a State, which, looking to its origin, ought only to have been a Province of the Empire. In fact, all that we can say of the constitution of the Empire at that time is, that what still remained of it was rather a hindrance, than a channel, to the vigorous impulses of the nation. The progress of the people in science and art, in politics and military strength, was only seen in the larger secular territories, which, after 1648, enjoyed their own sovereignty; and even these were checked in their movements at every step by the remnants of the Imperial Constitution. The Members of the Empire alone, in whom the decaying remains of Mediæval existence still lingered on—the Ecclesiastical Princes—the small Counts—the Imperial Knights and the Imperial Towns,—clung to the Emperor and the Imperial Diet. In these, partly from their small extent of territory, partly from the inefficiency of their institutions, neither active industry, nor public spirit, nor national pride, were

to be found. In all which tended to elevate the nation, and raise its hopes for the future, they took, at this period as little part as Austria herself. To her they were led, by similarity of nature, to look up as to their national guardian and protector; and for this reason they placed their votes in the Imperial Diet entirely at her disposal.

The Imperial constitution, therefore, was inwardly decayed, and stood in no relation to the internal growth of the nation. Nothing could be more perverse than to judge of the patriotism of single German Estates, according to the degree of devotion which they shewed to this constitution; it would be still more erroneous than to consider those German States as enemies of the German nation, which did not acknowledge the German Diet in 1850 or 1866. What we ought to look to is this; which of the German territories, in the last century, protected the vital interests of the German Empire at home and abroad with wisdom and energy?—For these are the true representatives of the Empire and of German unity; while the adherents of the dead forms of the Constitution ought only to be regarded as organs of weakness and division. That this constitution had no intrinsic worth, Austria knew best of all; and whenever the interests of the Austrian Dynasty required it, we see her unscrupulously emancipating herself from all the laws of the Empire. When the House of Hapsburg was in its decline, and Charles VI. wished to give his hereditary lands to his daughter, a succession of females was decreed without hesitation; although electoral Bohemia, according to the very first law of the Empire, could never descend to a woman. When the House of Hapsburg became extinct, Maria Theresa was determined never to acknowledge a non-Austrian-Emperor, although Charles of Bavaria had been legally elected according to all the Imperial laws. On this side also, therefore, the protection of the Imperial constitution was only a pretence; and the Austrian Government too was well aware, that it could avail nothing in opposition to a real and vital interest.

There was the same divergence between Austria and Germany with respect to their foreign interests, as we have observed in their internal relations. After the Turks had been driven from Hungary, and the Swedes from the half of Pomerania, Germany had only two neighbours whom it was a matter of vital importance to watch,—the Poles and the French. In the South, on the contrary, it had no interests in opposition to Italy, except the protection of its frontier by the possession or the neutrality of the Alpine passes. And yet it was just towards Italy that the eyes of the House of Hapsburg had been uninterruptedly directed for centuries past. The favourite traditions of the family, and their political and ecclesiastical interest in securing the support of the Pope, and thereby that of the Clergy, constantly impelled them to consolidate and extend their dominion in that country. All other considerations yielded to this; and this is intelligible enough from an Austrian point of view; but it was not on that account less injurious to the German Empire. How strikingly was this opposition of interests displayed at the end of the glorious war of the Spanish succession, when the Emperor rejected a peace which would have restored Strasburg and Alsace to the Empire, because only Naples, and not Sicily also, was offered to Austria. How sharply defined do the same relations present themselves to our view, in the last years of the Hapsburg dynasty, at the peace of Vienna in 1738!—on which occasion the Emperor—in order at least to gain Tuscany, as a compensation for the loss of Naples,—gave up Lorraine to the French, without even consulting the Empire, which he had dragged into the war. Austria thus maintained a predominant influence in Italy; but the Empire, during the whole century after the Peace of Westphalia, did not obtain a single noteworthy advantage over France. How much more was this the case with respect to Poland, which during the whole period of the religious wars had been the most zealous ally of Spain and the Hapsburgs, and

which subsequently seemed to threaten no danger to Austrian interests.

Poland, it is true, had deeply fallen from her former greatness, and was not for the moment too powerful a neighbour even for the Germans. She gave the most striking example of the insufficiency of the Feudal system; for the feudal development of its Constitution at home, and the feudal direction of its policy abroad, were the sole causes by which this once powerful people had been reduced to weakness. In the 15th century, when in the rest of Europe all the nations without exception manifested their unity in the form of strong military monarchies;—when the French and Spanish Nobles drew their swords in the service of their respective monarchs; when the English Lords renounced all the privileges of their Order, and sought for influence over their nation, solely in the Imperial Parliament;—the Polish Nobility began their efforts to make the license of individuals the chief law of the State. They successively did away with the hereditary succession to the Crown, the importance of the Royal Council, the distinction of classes among the Noblesse, the political rights of the towns, and the personal freedom of the peasants. The Assembly of Nobles was thus rendered all powerful against the other Orders, but had no power at all against the freedom of the individual noble; since the deputies were bound by certain instructions, concerning the execution of which they had to give an account to their constituents. Every Nobleman, moreover, had an hereditary right to appear at the diet. We see how short a step remained to the *liberum veto,* to the right of every individual Deputy to annul a decree by his sole opposition. This was a final result of the mediæval system—that overthrow of all rational principles of government, towards which all the kingdoms of Europe were hurrying headlong, when they were saved from destruction by the renewal of the antique idea of the Commonwealth and the consequences of ecclesiastical reform.

In the 16th century, this aristocratic Republic, gallant, haughty and full of religious zeal, undertook the same task in the East of Europe, as Philip of Spain, at the same period, was prosecuting in the West—the subjugation of the World in the name of the Catholic faith. As the Spanish monarch, the faithful champion of the ancient Church, aimed at the conquest of England, so Sigismund king of Poland endeavoured to subdue Sweden, the country of his birth. As Philip possessed adherents in France, for many years maintained a garrison in Paris, and for a moment had even a prospect of placing his daughter on the French throne; so Sigismund formed a party in Moscow, kept possession of the Kremlin for several years, and at last obtained the dignity of Czar for his son. But the issue was the same in the East as in the West; the attacks of Sigismund united the natural allies of his country with her hereditary enemies, and it was not with impunity that Poland allowed herself to be driven by Royal ambition and Jesuitical fanaticism into contest after contest, while all the best interests of the nation cried for peace. The Poles were every where beaten. As catholic France rallied at last round Henry IV., so orthodox Russia supported Michael Romanow; and as the infant navy of Elizabeth was developed in the struggle with Philip, so the most brilliant of Protestant heroes, Gustavus Adolphus, was formed in the Polish wars. Poland emerged from the endless contest in the same exhausted and dying state as Spain; and when, in 1714, the Powers of Europe divided the monarchy of Philip II.—when a French prince received the crown of Spain, Austria took possession of her Italian and Belgian provinces, and England of her commerce —the Eastern Powers talked more than once of either sharing the territories of Poland, or of setting over them a foreign Prince.

The attitude of Poland in the religious wars, especially, was by no means calculated to mitigate the mutual hatred, which had existed from the beginning of its history, between

this country and Northern Germany. For centuries the two nations had struggled for the broad plains which lie between the Elbe and the Vistula, which had once been possessed by the Germans, and after their withdrawal, in the 6th century, had been occupied by Sclavonians. In these regions, German colonization had first reconquered the Marches of Brandenburg and Silesia; and then the German sword had reduced the Prussian lands, whose heathen love of liberty had proved too strong for their Polish rulers. The rule of the Teutonic Order was first established in Prussia, in concert with Poland, but when the Knights rejected the Polish suzerainty, a deadly feud arose which, after a hundred years' struggle, ended with the entire subjection of the Order. East Prussia then became a Polish fief, and West-Prussia a Polish province. Now it so happened that those very provinces adopted Protestantism with assiduity and zeal, and that East Prussia thereby became a secular Duchy, which soon afterwards fell to the Electors of Brandenburg. West-Prussia, whose towns and nobles had for the most part become protestant, assumed the same attitude of opposition towards Sigismund as the Netherlands towards Philip II.; and the antagonism of province to kingdom, of the German to the Polish language, was enhanced by religious enmity; in this case, therefore, the victory of the Catholic reaction would have been destruction to the German element. But as the very contrary took place, the German cause shared in the victory of Protestantism, and in the last stage of the long wars the Elector of Brandenburg succeeded in forcing Poland to resign its suzerainty, and in raising East Prussia to the rank of an independent State. Poland yielded to necessity, but did not forget her claims; a few years afterwards she formed an alliance with Louis XIV. for the reconquest of Prussia, and when Frederick I. assumed the Royal crown, there was a shower of protests from the highest of the Polish Magnates. And thus on the Eastern frontier of the Empire, the Prussian State arose in the contest for German nationality, and re-

ligious freedom; and in the most complete internal and external antagonism to Poland. This enmity lay in the very nature of things; all must deplore it, but what influence can we allow to sentimental regrets in the relations of one nation to another? As long as Poland existed, it must necessarily strive to make Königsberg once more Polish, and Dantzic Catholic; as long as Brandenburg remained German and Protestant, its principal object must be to liberate West Prussia, and thereby to unite the Marches and the Duchy into a single State. The second and more important task was immediately taken up by the founder of the Prussian Sovereignty—the Elector Frederick William. His territories were small and scattered, but united by historical and natural ties, by language, religion and a similar fate; and he conceived the idea of giving internal unity to the State, the external existence and oneness of which he had already secured. As his successors carried out the same object on an ever increasing scale, a government arose which diffused ideas of unity and common weal, and subordinated all private interests, religious differences and class-privileges to the public good. Colbert's plans were here surpassed on German soil, while in their native country they came to a stand or perished through the idleness of Louis XV. The modern State in Prussia became strictly monarchical, for the same reason that at the same period it took a parliamentary form in England, and somewhat later, a democratic form in America. In all these cases the lead was taken by the class in which the fertile ideas of national unity, independence and devotion, were generated; and in Prussia this was, almost exclusively, the Monarch and his servants; while the Estates were either hostile or at least disinclined to innovation, and the mass of the people were entirely without political opinions.

An imitation of Colbert, whom we have just mentioned, is clearly discernible in the financial and commercial legis-

lation of Prussia, as well as in her efforts for the promotion of manufactures. In the long run, similar consequences of the well-meant error, of not only emancipating but endeavouring to protect industry, showed themselves in this country, as in France; and in course of time Prussia would not have escaped the impoverishment inseparably connected with that error. At first, however, in consequence of the artificial impulse thus given, Prussia enjoyed a brief but remarkable prosperity, which greatly contributed to place at the disposal of this small state, a disproportionately large supply of money;—a supply, indeed, which resembled rather a laboriously filled cistern, than the perennial wealth of a running stream. Under these circumstances, it was very fortunate that the German taste for agriculture still prevailed among all classes: and though the complete freedom of the soil, or an equality of taxation had not yet been obtained, yet the Noblesse lived among the peasants as protectors of their common interests, and the State was everywhere ready with its active assistance, and beneficent surveillance.* The result was unexpectedly favourable; on the whole the peasant of the Brandenburg March was not worse off than the peasant of Picardy, and much better than the Auvergnais. He did not look upon the State as a blood-sucking extortioner, nor on the Nobility as his social enemies—as was deplorably the case in France. The form of the administration and all the official machinery were throughout peculiar and national, having sprung partly from the ancient institutions of the country, and partly from the mind of the Monarch, without any foreign model.

Thus strong at home and master of all its resources—bound up from its origin with the great interests of the German Nation—the young State immediately began to advocate these interests in the Empire, and to uphold them against the rest of Europe. Frederick William having liberated Eastern Germany from Poland, then undertook, almost single-handed, to support the West of Germany and

Holland against the oppressor of Europe—Louis XIV. There is no doubt, that had he lived longer, he would have shared with William III. of Orange the glory of becoming the centre of the finally victorious resistance to the new master of the world. His successor followed the same course; and in the mind of Frederick William I. the independence of Prussia and the fulfilment of his duties to the German empire were constantly associated, And lastly Frederick the Great assumed the decisive attitude which shaped for ever the future of his country. He began his task at home, partly by developing the administration of justice to a great degree of independence, and partly, and more especially, by the complete emancipation of his country from the bonds of a dominant church. What the great Prince of Orange had probably wished but had not been able to do in England—*viz.* to shape his policy on political and not theological principles—Frederick was the first to carry into effect, and thereby paved the way for the national and spiritual life of modern times. With these operations, his relation to the German Empire was intimately connected. That confused medley of feudal and ecclesiastical formulæ was entirely incompatible with the new life which beat in every vein of the rising Prussian State; and the breach would have been unavoidable even though the Elector of Brandenbourg had never contended with the Queen of Hungary for the possession of Silesia. The whole relation between the two States had been clear to the keen intellect of the King from the very beginning. His efforts for his own aggrandizement were every where connected with his plan for the regeneration of Germany. His alliance with the Emperor Charles VII. was based upon the idea of superseding the old constitution of the Empire by an enduring Confederation of states; his war against Francis I. shook the stability of that constitution, by bringing about a military league between the powerful States of North Germany; and his opposition to Joseph II. ended in the league of German Princes embra-

cing all the States of Germany which had been reconstructed on modern principles. We need hardly say that he was influenced in all these proceedings quite as much by personal and Prussian ambition, as by German patriotism and public spirit. But the fact that these feelings did not run counter to each other in Prussia, as they did in Austria, but rather coincided in their course, is a proof of the healthy condition of the young State, and secured a powerful national support for the efforts of its monarch. It was felt as a benefit throughout the whole of Germany, that the military power of the northern part of it once more showed an imposing front.

This benefit was experienced, even during Frederick's life-time, in one of the most important national affairs—the final liberation of West Prussia from Polish dominion. The circumstances of the first partition of Poland—the means by which it was effected, and the legal pretext brought forward to justify it—it is not our purpose at present to discuss; we would only venture to make two remarks.

Frederick was first led to give this direction to his plans of conquest, by the wish to compensate Russia for her renunciation of Turkish booty which Austria would not allow her to receive. Austria had joined in the partition of Poland with a reluctance, which arose not merely from Maria Theresa's sense of justice, but also from the long-standing and natural connexion between her Empire and the Republic. Her opposition, however, was overcome, partly by the wish that the other two should not alone enrich themselves, and still more by the rise of a new principle of action—side by side with that of the Hapsburgs,—in the Austrian government itself. This was the first important occasion on which Joseph II. and the Lorraine policy made their influence felt. With regard to the consequences to Germany of this event, we need only mention that a million Germans were freed from a detested foreign yoke, and that the principal German State thereby brought its territories into a connected

mass. When the House of Hapsburg, at an earlier period, prepared to occupy Burgundy and Bretagne, France rose like one man, and thanked her Kings for tearing up the treaties they had sworn to; and yet it would be difficult to say, whether that was a more urgent danger to France than the continued rule of Poland over Prussia would have been. The evils, moreover, which threatened the German frontier from the East had assumed an entirely new character from the beginning of the century. The Polish republic had previously been a formidable neighbour from its superior power; it was now no less dangerous from its anarchy. Its intestine divisions allowed no rest, even to the surrounding states; each faction had recourse to some foreign Power, and Russian influence and Russian arms were continually gaining a firmer footing in the distracted land. During the whole Seven years' war, the professedly neutral soil of the Polish republic was really the head quarters, the source of supplies, and the base of operations, of the Russian armies against North Germany. Silesia, Brandenburg, East Prussia, all the German land between Niemen and the Vistula, and on the other side between the Oder and the Elbe, were alike endangered. Under these circumstances, the importance to Germany of the occupation of the lower Vistula is self-evident. In fact the whole position of affairs was intolerable for Germany, and to effect a radical change in a manner agreeable to Poland was not possible. It is customary in the present day, to lament that Germany did not strengthen Poland by a close alliance, and thus oppose a warlike bulwark to the advances of Russia. But as matters then stood, it would not in the first place have been possible to have gained the consent of the Poles themselves, since their King was entirely devoted to the Russians, and their Nobility was filled with a violent hatred against every thing which bore the German name. In the next place, such a step would have required the united force of all Germany; and we know that on the Polish, as well as on every other question, the views of

Austria and Prussia were utterly opposed. What means then remained of preventing the Russians from pushing forward their outposts close upon the centres of North German life! The complication which the adoption of these means were subsequently to give rise to, we shall hereafter see in the course of the revolutionary period.

Meanwhile a new epoch had commenced in the history of Austria, the first stage of which has scarcely yet been traversed, even at the present day. We have seen the Hapsburgs first making territorial supremacy in Germany their object—then aiming at universal dominion over a Catholic World—and, finally, pursuing a feudal policy in Austria. But their dynasty came to an end in 1740, and was succeeded by the family of the Dukes of Lorraine, who forthwith directed their efforts towards the centralization and unity of the Austrian State.

The Houses of Lorraine and Hapsburg had long stood in close relation to one another, and had pursued common objects. The former, like the latter, had assumed its modern attitude in the religious wars of the 16th century. It was by a scion of the House of Lorraine that the family of the Guises was founded, which was foremost, in the French civil war, in combating the Huguenots, and at last fought against France herself in close alliance with Philip of Spain. The branch of this house which ruled at home, cut down, about the same time, 20,000 Protestant peasants in Lorraine in a single day. They then formed connexions by marriage with Catharine de Medicis, and afforded powerful aid to the Guises and Spaniards against Henry IV. The Bourbons never forgave them this conduct, and it became, thenceforward, one of the chief objects of French policy, to deprive this family of Lorraine. On this account the latter sought to connect themselves more closely,—not with Germany, from a union with which they had been released by Charles V.—but with the Hapsburgs, who, especially in the thirty years' war—both against the Elector Frederick, and the Swedes

and French—had no more zealous or fiery champion than Duke Charles IV. of Lorraine. His successor fought the battles of Austria in Hungary, by which Pesth was once more wrested from the Turks; and he gained in return the hand of an Austrian Archduchess. The descendant of this marriage was Francis Stephen, the favoured suitor of Maria Theresa, and consequently the successor of the Hapsburgs in the Austrian crown-lands. He was personally very insignificant; and left the cares of State to his energetic and ambitious Consort, who was sagacious enough to understand the necessities of the times, and to take important steps to remodel the internal constitution of the Austrian State. The first administrations which deserve the name were created by her; the military system was reformed on the principle of greater unity and uniformity, and she directed close attention to the condition of the peasants, as the great source of the military strength and revenue of the country. Even in the most unruly lands of the Empire—Belgium and Hungary—the Emperor succeeded by tact and gentleness in taking from the hands of the Nobility a number of important privileges, and thereby strengthening the authority of the central Government.

But Maria Theresa was too genuine a Hapsburg to be able to emancipate herself entirely from the principles of government hereditary in this race. It was not until her son, Joseph II., the first real Emperor of the Lorraine dynasty, came to the throne, that the end of feudal Austria, and the commencement of the modern united and centralised State, was proclaimed both in form and fact. His legislation is renowned and has often been described and discussed. No one will deny that he was actuated by an active philanthropy, and a ceaseless impulse towards progress. He was earnestly zealous for the welfare of his subjects, and strove, with restless haste, to lead them to a higher stage of free industry, moral dignity, and intellectual culture. It would be almost sinful to doubt the sincerity of his aspira-

tions, which manifested themselves in such numberless forms, and found so touching an expression in the despairing words of his last illness. Yet we see this "crowned philanthropist," as his age loved to call him, not only arbitrarily abolishing the pernicious privileges of the Nobility and Clergy, but invading with open violence the sanctuaries of human existence—religion, language and love of home. While he justly placed the pride of his legislation in the emancipation of the soil, he disturbed the poor peasants of his provinces in the enjoyment of their only form of spiritual life—the devotional services of their Church. While he proclaimed the equality of high and low before the law, he compelled the Magyar and the Croat to seek for justice from German officials, whose language they could not understand. And, lastly, the same monarch who would hear of nothing at home but civilization and prosperity, appears abroad in the character of an unscrupulous conqueror, engages in quarrels along the whole line of his extensive frontiers, never allows a weaker neighbour to rest, or knows how to be at peace with a stronger; and at last fills half the world with the tumult of his arms. We should do him injustice, if we were to attribute this latter feature of his government to personal ambition alone; we should raise him above his merits, if we were to seek the sole spring of his character in his reforming philanthropy.

All these inconsistencies become intelligible when we rightly comprehend the leading principle of his policy. Certain as it is that he felt a warm interest in the welfare of his subjects, it is no less certain, that the ultimate object of his reforms was, not the progress of his people, but the power of his Empire. He had seen how ill Austria had fared in her contest against Prussia with her modern culture, and he therefore determined, before all things, to carry out the system of modern centralization in the mediæval framework of his various dominions. As the laws of the *Physiocrates* and Rationalists seemed to him adapted for his

purpose, he became a zealous apostle of enlightenment; and because he would acknowledge no obstacle in the sphere of his power, he showed the same disregard for natural right as for chartered wrong, for religious feeling and national pride, as for ecclesiastical abuses, and aristocratic monopolies. He was resolved that Austria should become a centralized State, like the Prussia of that period, or the France of to-day; that no foreign power, whether of the German Empire, or the Romish Church, should any longer exercise an influence on its internal affairs; that it should gain well rounded, and, if possible, extended frontiers on every side, and thus come forth from the centre of Europe, as the first of European Powers. He was therefore in a state of coninual aggression against his privileged orders, his peoples, and his neighbours.

So comprehensive an attack on others, naturally called forth an equally universal resistance. Joseph's policy refused to recognize any of the props on which the power of the Austrian government had hitherto rested; no wonder, then, that ferment and dissolution showed themselves on every side. The greatest influence on this occasion was exerted by the Church, which the Emperor opposed by every means in his power, partly as being foreign,—in so far as it was in the hands of the Pope, Superiors of Ecclesiastical Orders, or Prelates of the German Empire—and partly, as prejudicial to the financial interests of the State—because it withdrew large tracts of land from taxation and free alienation. But he was soon made to feel, what he had not chosen to learn beforehand; in this very disagreement with the Crown, the Church most clearly proved, how indispensable her agency was to the Austrian Government, in controlling the motley elements of the Empire. When the Church was driven into hostility to the Imperial authority, the latter suddenly lost the means of uniting the different nationalities. All the distinctive national feelings of Magyars, Belgians, and Sclavonians were awakened; it seemed as if the Austrian

dominion had not been forced upon these peoples centuries ago, but in the last few days; for they all vied with one another in their efforts to free themselves from the foreign yoke. What a contrast in character and actions, between Joseph and his great model, Frederick the Great! Frederick's motives are throughout deeper and nobler, and, on that account, his *modus operandi* is calmer, more circumspect, and more fertile of results. Satisfied that no narrow orthodoxy any longer held dominion over himself, and his own people, he nowhere interferes with the religious conscience of his subjects; well knowing that a nation may be raised to mental freedom by education, but not by force. An opposite course of proceeding was the cause of Joseph's ruin, and his successors, too, seem never to have asked themselves a higher question than this: whether the Church was to be the subservient tool of the State, for the attainment of power and conquest, or *vice versa*.

Joseph severed all the ties which bound him to the German Empire, as well his relations to the Church. The transformation of Austria into a Central State was in itself sufficient to tear the last threads of the rotten fabric, which hitherto bore the name of the Constitution of the German Empire. Joseph broke off his existing relations with the German Diet and Estates, as decidedly as Frederick the Great himself. As he thereby lost the legal influence, which Austria had exercised in the Empire through the Knights and Cities, the Prelates and Counts of the Diet, Joseph endeavoured, all the more earnestly, to compensate for the loss by means of troops and diplomatists. The old claims on Bavaria were now repeatedly brought forward; Suabia was to be gradually subjected from the side of the Austrian possessions on the Black Forest, and Franconia would then be nothing but an Austrian province. As the result of these successes Northern Germany would have been hemmed in, and overpowered on every side. But unfortunately it became apparent, how ill-adapted Austria, from her very

composition—her foreign elements, interests, and historical traditions—was, to exercise such a hegemony over Germany. In spite of Joseph's enlightened views, the feelings of all the liberal party in Germany were against him; and he, on his part, did not scruple to promise France the possession of the infinitely important territory of Luxemburg, if she would help him to acquire Bavaria. The more moderate statesmen of his own Empire themselves declared, at a later period, that the very nature of things forbids such an extension of Austrian rule, and that Austria's own interests would be better served by a free internal development, than by the forced subjection of Northern and Western Germany. When forced into unnatural union, these two great countries would be in a constant state of internecine war; if left to develope independently, the one would have no closer or surer ally than the other. But Joseph lived and moved in the idea of adding the other German Lands, as vassal States, to his united empire; the consequence was, the combined opposition of all German Princes, powerfully supported by public opinion.

But his policy attained a much higher significance, when, after forming a close alliance with Russia in 1788, it contemplated the partition of the Turkish empire. It is unnecessary to explain to readers of the present day the world-wide importance of such a plan; one point in the position of affairs, at that time, deserves particular notice, namely this; that King Stanislaus of Poland had zealously joined this alliance. As one of the numerous lovers of the Empress Catharine, he had been raised to the throne by her influence, had then consented to cooperate in national reforms, in consequence of which he had incurred the enmity of Russia, and witnessed the catastrophe of the first Partition of Poland. Since that time, he had allowed the Russian Ambassador to rule in Warsaw;—had signed a treaty making Russia the guarantee of the Polish constitution,—or non-constitution,—and had become thoroughly convinced

that Poland could only prosper under the protection of Russia. While, therefore, the powerful families of the Potocki and Czartoriski sought protection against Russia at the Court of Vienna, Stanislaus was incessantly recommending Russia to change the elective monarchy into a hereditary one. When the two allied Emperors began, in 1788, their grand operations, the Potocki broke off their relations to Austria, but Stanislaus was more eager than ever to gain the friendship of Catharine and Joseph. At a conference at Canieff, therefore, he joyfully assented to a proposal of the two Imperial courts, that he should induce the Polish republic to equip 100,000 men. This force was to be used, in the first place, for the Turkish war, but "likewise for any other contest"—a clause which at the present moment could only have reference to Prussia. The whole Sclavonian East, therefore, supported by all the power of the Austrian monarchy, rose in arms, for an attack in the first place, on Constantinople, but also for ulterior objects which no one could foresee.[1]

Such attempts have never been made in Europe, without calling forth the liveliest opposition from every quarter. The King of Prussia, who had just tested the military power of his State, in a rapid suppression of disturbances in Holland, had no intention of retreating, by a single hair's-breadth, from the position of Frederick the Great. England, under the energetic conduct of her great Minister, the younger Pitt, was angry with Russia—which had shortly before granted a favourable treaty to French commerce—and, even at that time, regarded the preservation of Turkey as one of the leading principles of her policy. These two Powers formed an alliance with Holland, which was entirely guided by them, for the purpose of opposing the Imperial Courts

[1] Herzberg's unpublished memoirs, "Sur l'Alliance conclue en 1790 entre la Prusse et la Pologne." There is a series of valuable additions to the *précis* published in *Schmidt's* Journal, which have been made use of for the following.

on all points, and especially in the Turkish question.[1] This treaty produced an effect throughout the whole of Europe, by its mere existence, without any military preparations, or force of arms. Whoever felt his rights or hopes in any degree threatened by the Imperial Courts, turned his eyes towards the new alliance. Sweden was already at open war with Russia, and occupied the latter's best regiments on the Neva; the Turks, with renewed courage, collected their forces for the defence of their frontiers. The Prussian ambassador in Poland appealed to the patriotic party in the Diet; the possibility of a Russian alliance immediately vanished, and an increasing number of voices was raised in favour of a close alliance with Prussia. All the Provinces of Austria herself were in a state of ferment. Hungary, whose constitution Joseph had just been destroying piecemeal, was on the very verge of revolution; Belgium, after long agitation, suddenly rose in rebellion on the 19th December 1789, drove the Austrian garrison from her capital, and the Imperial authorities over her borders. In both these countries, the object was to defend existing rights against the new principle of centralization; in both the Clergy and Nobility headed the opposition, and were aided by the enthusiastic support of the people. Both immediately entered into a close understanding with Prussia. The latter had just obtained a firm footing on the Belgian frontier, by protecting the constitution of Liège against the encroachment of the Bishop; and the two Prussian generals, Schönfeld and Köhler, now entered the Belgian service, to organize the army of the Congress. A deputation from the Hungarian opposition repaired to Berlin, and it was even proposed that the Diet should formally place the rights of the Kingdom of Hungary under the guarantee of Prussia.

[1] Herzberg. The King had resolved, subsequently to Sept. 1789 to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Porte, and in the following, Spring to commence a war against the Imperial Courts.

In spite, therefore, of several splendid victories over the Turks, the position of the two Imperial Courts was extremely critical. Hatred and distrust in the German empire—violent ferment in the republic of Poland—their own troops engaged in distant contests, and no ally in Western Europe but France, over whose head the waves of revolution were violently breaking. Devoured by care and sickness, Joseph could come to no resolution. He made some concession to the Hungarians, retained his warlike zeal against the Turks, and took no measures to defend his frontier against the Prussians. The Belgian revolt was the last straw which broke his spirit, and he died two months afterwards, on the 10th February 1790.

CHAPTER II.

NOOTKA SOUND AND REICHENBACH.

LEOPOLD II.—COUNT HERZBERG'S PLANS.—BREACH BETWEEN ENGLAND AND SPAIN.—LAFAYETTE WISHES FOR A WAR WITH ENGLAND.—THE MARITIME POWERS RENOUNCE HERZBERG'S PLANS.—MIRABEAU AND THE JACOBINS ARE IN FAVOUR OF PEACE.—TREATY OF REICHENBACH.—PROGRESS OF AUSTRIA.

JOSEPH'S brother, the Grand-duke Leopold of Tuscany, had formerly often blamed the rash and adventurous policy of the Emperor, and thereby drawn upon himself the deep displeasure of Joseph. As his successor, he was now to withdraw the tottering State from the edge of the abyss. It was no small piece of good fortune for the House of Lorraine, that this brother existed to take the helm of the State in such stormy times. Discreet and calm, gentle, moderate and yet immovably firm, he entered on the business of his office, and succeeded at once in spreading confidence around him; and this victory over the minds of men included within it all future triumphs. He had intellect enough to appreciate the grand views of Joseph, and was just sufficiently frivolous to keep himself at a sober distance from all ideal aims. Before all things it was necessary that he should put an end to the present crisis; and he was ready to forego his brother's grand plans of conquest, provided that nothing was done to interfere with the future prospects of his Empire, and that his opponents acquired no accession of territory. He was sufficiently imbued with the principles of his family to adhere to these fundamental maxims with immovable firmness.

As the Anglo-Prussian league had just been formed for the preservation of the *status quo*, an agreement, it would seem, might have been easily come to. But Leopold had no intention, after all, of ending the war without any compensation for expenses incurred; Russia moreover repelled all interference of strangers in her victorious course; and, above all, his enemies, conscious of their strength, were likewise determined to carry off some reward of their exertions. At the head of these was the Prussian Minister, the aged Count Herzberg, whom, a whole age before, Frederick the Great had called his pupil in diplomacy, and who had learned not a little from his great master. He possessed great penetration, untiring industry, just so much conceit as a diplomatist needs to give him perfect self-confidence, and, above all, unbounded devotion to the interests of his government; so that his only pleasure, and his only sense of right, were centred in promoting the interests of Prussia. By these various gifts, he had brought Joseph II. into such a position, that he could be checkmated by the first move of the Prussian army. His whole life was bound up in the progress of Prussia, and he knew how to set all Europe in motion for the furtherance of his own plans. He has been unjustly accused of having neglected German affairs—in which the interests of Prussia were more closely and deeply concerned—to busy himself in the disputes concerning Sweden and Finland, Turkey and Poland. From Frederick the Great's more comprehensive point of view he had rightly apprehended, that the most important step in the German question was to ward off the encroachments of Austria, and that this could only be done on the wide field of European policy. He therefore kept this main point constantly in sight, and followed it up with a rare mixture of cool calculation, and lively energy. He wished to inspire both Poland and the Sublime Porte with confidence in Prussia, and thereby to keep them stedfast in their resistance to the Imperial Courts. For this purpose he met their views with

great zeal, fired the martial spirit of the Turks, and favoured certain changes in the Polish constitution, which were so many blows to Russian influence. But he did not wish to proceed further in this direction; for a complete restoration of Poland did not seem to him to lie in the interests of Prussia. He was therefore opposed to the conclusion of a formal treaty with either Poland or the Porte,[1] since these States were already exclusively dependent on Prussian aid; and any compact with them could only have the effect of binding the hands of Prussia. His intention was, to leave a small portion of their booty to the Imperial Courts, victorious on the Danube, but to gain in return from both equivalent advantages for Prussia. Russia, namely, was to restore a part of Finland to the Swedes, and Austria a part of Galicia to the Poles; in return for which, Poland was to give the cities of Dantzic and Thorn, and Sweden a portion of Pomerania, to Prussia. The Turks might thank Heaven, that through Prussia's intervention, they had got off with so little loss. Considering the dangerous position of Austria, the impossibility that the Russians could maintain themselves on the soil of the Polish Republic against the united will of Prussia and Poland, and the complete readiness for action of a Prussian army of 160,000 men, such a scheme did not appear quixotical, either in respect to its object or its means. Sweden was ready to do anything at the price of a few millions;[2] Poland would be essentially a gainer—since Thorn and Dantzic as *enclaves* of Prussia were of little value

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[1] Herzberg's report to the King, of July 6th 1789—Despatches to Lucchesini, of July 11th and 31st: Count Golz, too, who was intimately acquainted with Polish affairs, says, in a memorial addressed to Herzberg (May 10th 1791), that Poland, enraged against Russia, was ready for war, and would have attached herself closely to Prussia, if the latter had not always hesitated, &c. &c. —

[2] Herzberg to the King, 17. Dec. 1793: "*Ne pouvait elle (votre majesté) pas y ajouter (à Danzig, &c.) encore la Poméranie suédoise pour un couple de millions, un petit bout de la Finlande, en faisant avoir à la Russie la ville d'Oczakow?*"

to the Republic, and the districts of Galicia offered to them were of sixfold the extent, with thrice the population. If we look then to the interests of Germany, the acquisition of Dantzic and Pomerania was as favourable, as the partition of Turkey between the Russians and Austrians would have been prejudicial, to them.

But whatever else we may think of this project, we can not defend it from the charge of being arbitrary and artificial, and so adroit an opponent as the Emperor Leopold did not for a moment neglect to turn its weak points to his purpose. The fact that Herzberg's plan aimed at the aggrandizement of Prussia, was sufficient to determine the Emperor to give it his uncompromising opposition. He would rather give up all his gains on the Danube, than allow Prussia to grow stronger on the Baltic. He knew his opponent well enough to take the right means of obtaining his object. Passing over the Minister, he appealed to King Frederick William himself, in an unreserved and confidential letter. There was in the Prussian King a strong vein of devotedness and docility; the higher his sense of his own dignity, the more easily did he allow himself to be won by the first step which was made towards him in confidence, and he excused many an imprudence in himself, which he would never have pardoned in a Minister. At first many difficult complications presented themselves: the King adhered to Herzberg's plans, and promised, if Leopold consented to them, to leave him free hand in Belgium, and to give him his vote at the election of Emperor. But in other respects he had already swerved from Herzberg's line of policy. After he had been persuaded, in January, to make an alliance with the Turks—so that Herzberg's plan could not well be realized without the consent of the Porte—he allowed himself at the end of March to be forced into an alliance with Poland, without stipulating beforehand for the cession of Dantzic and Thorn.[1] When therefore Leopold evaded his

[1] Herzberg.

engagements, collected troops in Bohemia, and—instead of the desired armistice,—renewed hostilities against the Turks, the right moment had surely come to take vigorous measures. In case of war, Poland would have immediately risen against the Russians; and there was not the slightest doubt, that at the first blow Hungary would have been in open rebellion;[1] the chances therefore were as favourable as possible. But instead of taking advantage of them, a useless discussion was carried on, by letter, between the two Monarchs, as to whether the resignation of all her conquests, or Herzberg's plan of exchange, would be most favourable for Austria.

While the peace of Europe in the East was thus balanced on points of diplomacy, an insignificant dispute arose on the other side of the Ocean, the reaction of which summoned the South and West of our quarter of the globe to arms.

For some time past, England and Spain had been at feud concerning a stripe of land—which in our times has once more become an apple of discord between Anglo-Americans and Spanish Mexicans—viz. Nootka Sound in California. The Spaniards, who still grounded their sovereignty on a Papal grant of the 16th century, would not allow the settlements, which bold English merchants had made in that region for the sake of the fur-trade. At last they asserted their claims by force of arms; whereupon the liveliest indignation was kindled in England, and a warlike spirit took possession of the Cabinet, the Parliament and the whole nation. Spain, in her anxiety, appealed to the French government for aid, in virtue of the Bourbon family compact of 1762. In the extraordinary state of agitation in which the French nation then was, it was natural that such a prospect should excite the liveliest emotion among all parties.

[1] Despatches of the Prussian Ambassador Jacobi in Vienna, July 12th and 24th, Oct. 10th. The Hungarian Diet demanded an immediate conclusion of peace,—return of the Hungarian regiments, and guarantee of the Hungarian constitution by the German Princes.

It had already been a subject of discussion in Paris, during the winter, whether a foreign war might not be a useful means of diverting the popular passions into a new channel, and placing greater military forces at the disposal of the Government. Montmorin was still at the head of foreign affairs, and had remained firm in that leaning towards Austria, with which Brienne's Ministry had refreshed men's recollections of 1756. When Austria, therefore, saw herself so hard pressed in the East by the English, her Ambassador in Paris, Count Mercy, found a favourable hearing, when he solicited the interference of France. Lafayette was not disinclined to such a step; he hated England from the bottom of his heart; we have already observed his anti-English machinations in Ireland and Holland, and he even now indulged the hope of aiding the Democrats in those countries, overthowing the Prince of Orange, who had the countenance of England and Prussia, and marching into Amsterdam as liberator, and as *triumphator* into Paris. "He dreams of nothing," wrote the American Ambassador in January "but driving the Stadtholder of Holland into a swamp." What could Austria have imagined more agreeable to her, than a diversion like this,—which would have entirely withdrawn England from the East? But in this case, as in all others, Lafayette was incapable of forming a decided resolution. If France commenced a war against the maritime powers, she would, indeed, promote the interests of Austria, but would, at the same time, cut the strongest roots of the Belgian Revolution. But Lafayette had democratic friends in Brussels as well as Amsterdam, and several of his envoys were carrying on an active negotiation with the Belgian Estates. One feature of the revolution in Belgium was extremely disagreeable to him, *viz.* that it was still in the hands of the Clergy, the Nobility and the Guilds, and had nothing of the "Rights of man" about it. But, at all events, it was a revolution, and its suppression appeared to the hero of the American and French revolutions, an intolerable

thing. He therefore did his utmost to bring the very small party, which professed French principles, to the head of affairs in Brussels. As the reward of compliance with his wishes, he promised the energetic intervention of France in favour of Belgian independence, at the very time that he was meditating the destruction of the Prince of Orange, the most zealous ally of Belgium. He finally decided on the plan, that Austria should retain possession of Belgium, on condition of introducing the "Rights of man," and French liberty; a programme which certainly reconciled the opposing schemes, but on the other hand had all the interested parties —Austria, the Belgian Estates, and the Brussels democrats[1] —against it. The difficulty was increased by the unfortunate position of affairs in the interior of France. The Government had neither money nor serviceable troops, and feared above all things to add new troubles to those which already existed. In spite therefore of Lafayette's desire for war, peace remained undisturbed during the winter.

In the spring, however, the above-mentioned news from Spain arrived. The Ministry, although very doubtful about the consequences, could no longer maintain peace by their own sole will, and were obliged to think of arming, according to the letter of the treaty. All the projects of Lafayette and his friends once more came to light. To make sure of the National Assembly, they collected all their most trusty adherents from the party of the Left at a great banquet, at which, after many toasts, and much discussion, a permanent association—the Club of 1789—and a separate party—the Left centre—was formed. Their cry for the present was, support of the Ministry in a war against England.

The mere possibility of this war refreshed every nerve of the Austrian policy. Leopold did not hesitate, for a moment, in choosing rather to lose all his Turkish booty, than

[1] On this subject no one enlarges more than Lafayette himself in his memoirs.

concede a clod of soil to the Prussian. In the beginning of May he informed the English Ambassador that he was willing to make peace on the basis of the *status quo*—except that the Turks were to cede Orsova to him, as a rectification of his boundaries—and to restore to Belgium its old constitution; by which concessions, he said, he hoped to satisfy every just claim. He added, that if he were compelled to go to war, by any further demand, he should be obliged to abandon a portion of Belgian territory to France, that she might help him to recover the rest. Joseph II. had already offered a portion of Belgium to the French, on condition of their helping him to conquer Bavaria;[1] we may easily conceive that his threat carried double weight under present circumstances. The maritime Powers came to a decision at once. It was not at all to their commercial interests that Prussia should obtain Dantzic; and they were, therefore, from the very first, by no means enthusiastic for Herzberg's plans, and had themselves proposed to Austria an agreement on the *status quo*. Consequently the danger of seeing Belgium fall a prey to the French arms, and Holland threatened, overcame all further scruples, and they declared themselves ready to accept the offers of Leopold. Herzberg's scheme was thus deprived of its foundation, and Leopold could now look forward, with a lighter heart, to the continuance of his negotiation with Prussia.

Meanwhile affairs in Paris took a very unexpected turn. The foundation of the Club of 1789 alarmed the Jacobins. Their leaders, Barnave, the Lameths and Duport, differed, it is true, but very little from Lafayette in their political tendencies. But they were divided by a no less potent cause;—he was in power, and they *wished* to be so. They were, therefore, opposed to him on all occasions, and even in the question of war, the Jacobins determined to throw obstacles in the General's way.

[1] The English Ambassador Keith to his Minister, Vienna, May 11th: Coxe's "Austria."

The result was, that each of the parties assumed a singular and unnatural attitude: Montmorin and Lafayette,—the representatives of the Government,—wished for war; the Jacobins,—the organs of progressive revolution—contended for peace. Both were of opinion that war would confirm the strength of the crown, and both were working in diametrical opposition to the interests of their party. In reality there was no greater danger to the King, and no more splendid prospect for the Jacobins, than war. It is true that civil liberty can never be promoted by war, yet war did not run counter to the interests of the Jacobins, because they were aiming to establish—not the freedom of the citizens, but the rule of the demagogues. The latter always gain by war, because it surrounds the country with dangers, and fills it with fiery passions. When allowed to run its full course, it always leads to a Dictatorship, because it needs a Dictatorship; but it has no motive for placing this absolute power in the hands of legitimate authority, but bestows it on the strongest and the boldest. It brought Charles I. and Louis XVI. to the scaffold, and raised Cromwell, Robespierre and Bonaparte to despotic power. At that time, however, Robespierre never dreamed of such a possibility; and he and his friends involuntarily exerted themselves to save the Government of Louis XVI. from destruction.

On the 14th, the National Assembly received a message from the Ministry, who asked for supplies for warlike preparations, in consequence of the Californian troubles. Lafayette's influence was strong enough to produce an immediate and zealous spirit of compliance with their wishes. In the evening, the rostra and the press of the Jacobin club resounded with angry denunciations and apprehensions. They accused the Government of intending to cause a national bankruptcy by war, and to overthrow the constitution; they had the fear of an Austrian intrigue in the Tuileries before their eyes. They declared, that there was but one means of escaping the danger, and that was a decree to deprive

the King of the power of making peace and war, and to bestow it exclusively on the National Assembly. Lameth, consequently, on the following morning, brought forward his motion, which appeared to him, he said, to contain the most direct and natural deduction from acknowledged principles. The National Assembly expresses the will of the nation, and the Executive carries out that will; the former, therefore, has to declare whether the nation wishes for war, and the latter to carry the declaration of war into execution, like any other law. The ground of contest was well chosen to secure the support of the great mass of the Deputies, who were still honestly enamoured of the "Rights of man," and still believed that they were doing a good deed in weakening the power of the Crown. Lameth's motion occupied the attention of the Assembly to such a degree, that for several days the Minister's application for money was forgotten.

On this occasion the Jacobins displayed all their dislike to war. "In times of peace," cried Aiguillon, "freedom is invincible; in war, intrigues are rife, and a victorious king would be the greatest danger to freedom." Robespierre took up the same position. "War," said he, "is a means of defending arbitrary power against the People; assume to yourselves the right of making war and peace, and war will be impossible; but if you trust the words of the Ministers, you will at once proclaim war and your own slavery." Then came a perfect flood of historical reminiscences of the frivolous wars of crowned heads, and bitter allusions to the alleged intrigues between the Government at home and foreign potentates. "It is very possible," said Lameth, "that there are sufficient grounds for making war; it is possible also that the Courts have concerted a war with one another; for it is now a question of a war of all Kings against their Peoples."

The effect produced in the Assembly, the galleries, and among the street politicians, was very great. Neither Lafayette,—who feared the hissing of the populace more than

that of a cannon ball,—nor his friends, ventured to stem the torrent; all thoughts of war were abandoned. Custine alone spoke of England's ambition, against which, he said, the French people must summon all their strength; the others contented themselves with upholding the constitutional point. And here the crown would have fared but ill, if, with the exception of the Right, it had had no supporters but Lafayette. But a very different kind of champion now came forward for its defence, and by a diversion, as powerful as it was unexpected, wrested the prize of victory from the Jacobins on their own ground.

Since the 7th of November, Mirabeau had remained almost inactive in the Assembly. Without sacrificing a single principle, he maintained his popularity among the Parisians, by occasionally dealing one of his crushing oratorical blows against the Right. He had no motive for sparing the Ministers, and he now came forward, once more, as the old revolutionist. Secretly he was endeavouring to come to a fresh understanding, sometimes with the Count of Provence, and sometimes with Lafayette, but without success. In March, however, he met at last with unlooked-for assistance. The Austrian Ambassador, Count Mercy, a man of extensive knowledge and strong character, who had been for a long time past a personal friend of the Queen, and was informed of Mirabeau's real feelings by Count La Marck, persuaded Marie Antoinette no longer to reject such a powerful ally. The Queen had long wished to make the attempt to come to a direct understanding with the most prominent leaders of the National Assembly; but she had always turned away with a shudder at the very mention of Mirabeau, whom she looked on as the instigator of the murderous attack of the 6th of October. When La Marck had quieted her mind on this point, a preliminary arrangement was come to after much consideration. The King paid Mirabeau's debts, (200,000 francs) and gave him a monthly pension of 1000 crowns, in return for which Mirabeau gave the King ad-

vice, and promised to protect the interests of the Crown in the National Assembly. It was fully understood that it was not a question of restoring the *ancien régime;* the King, with his passive disposition, had no longing for absolute authority, nor any views on any one question of constitutional policy. If he could once gain security for his person, his wishes with respect to the extent of the royal authority hardly went so far as Mirabeau's former convictions of the necessity of a strong government in France. In respect, therefore, to the object to be obtained, there was little difficulty; but where were the means? Every attempt to restore the Monarchy would meet with a hundred-fold more difficulties now, in May, than it would have done in November. At all events absolute unity and consistency of action, the fullest powers for Mirabeau as leader, and incessant activity on all sides, were indispensable prerequisites for success. If Mirabeau could not become Minister himself, the first object should have been to form a Ministry entirely devoted, or, at least, entirely subject, to him. If he himself, in his boundless activity, often changed his route, and thereby lost much time, it should have been the sole occupation of the King to keep him to the task he had commenced, and to hasten its accomplishment. But the very contrary of all this took place. The Court could not bestow its full confidence; the King was unable either to part with his Ministers, or to bend them to his will. The Queen took counsel with Mirabeau, but also with many very different men; and it was always with inward reluctance that she took any part in State affairs, which only wearied her. Mirabeau, who had no taste for being made use of in so purposeless a manner, occasionally hurled his thunderbolts from the rostra, which had far more effect than all the noisy bluster of the Jacobins, but did not improve the position of affairs, and served to irritate and embitter the feeling of the Court. Whether an alliance of this nature could bear good fruit must seem doubtful from the very first.

At this period, however, when the question as to the right of declaring war was being discussed, Mirabeau was still full of the prospects which had been opened to him two days before. He saw that the simple assertion of the King's exclusive right to declare war could no longer be successfully maintained in the Assembly, nor was he himself inclined to enter the lists in such a cause. The fine phrases about the ambition of Kings, who squandered the blood of the people in dynastic feuds, could not, of course, induce him to transfer the decision to an Assembly, which was just as selfish and fond of rule, and which was possessed of far less practical knowledge than the Executive. But he did wish to secure to the French Chamber as decisive an influence, as that of the English Parliament; and while in England long custom made all enactments on the subject superfluous, it was necessary in France to fix the usage for the future by an express law. The case before him seemed especially calculated to substantiate the evils of a solely Ministerial decision on the question of peace or war. Though Lafayette had been, for the moment, frightened out of all his warlike intentions, yet the future was by no means secure from his ambition. But a foreign war appeared to Mirabeau—and in this he showed his superiority in penetration over Lafayette as well as the Jacobins—the greatest misfortune which could befall the French Government, in its present position. He wished for peace, like the Jacobins, but it was that he might disarm the Jacobins.

He took his measures accordingly. In the first place he demanded the granting of the subsidies, as defensive preparations were under all circumstances indispensable. He then pointed out the impossibility of depriving the King—the Director of foreign affairs and military measures—of the power of declaring war; dwelling, at the same time, on the effectual control which the popular representatives could exercise through their right of voting supplies, and of calling Ministers to account for their acts. The more forcibly and

loudly he spoke, the louder and more threatening were the angry cries of the Left, and the greater the excitement of the masses. In the streets, they hawked about a pamphlet—"The great treachery of the Count Mirabeau;"—before the door of the Assembly; the masses of the people were heaving to and fro in breathless suspense, applauding Lameth, cursing Mirabeau, and baited into an agony of fire and fury by a multitude of alarming reports. The Jacobins fixed on the young and gifted Barnave to answer their dreaded opponent; and had the satisfaction of seeing their orator acquit himself of his task in the most brilliant manner. After pointing out the insufficiency of the guarantees, recommended by Mirabeau, against an irregular lust of war in the monarch, and the terrible importance of every war to the welfare and freedom of the land, he condensed his argument into the one constitutional proposition—that the declaration of such a catastrophe must necessarily be the act of the National will; which could only be expressed and carried into execution by the organ of that will—the legislative Power. His speech produced a tremendous effect in the Chamber, the galleries, and throughout the metropolis. But on the following day, Mirabeau attacked him with overwhelming force in the very centre of his position. He began with the incontrovertible proposition, that though a declaration of war was, like a law, an expression of the national will, the King, in virtue of his sanction which was necessary to the validity of every law, was a joint possessor of the legislative power. He then overwhelmed all doubts by a close, and logical line of argument, delivered with all the passionate fervour of his nature;—met and confuted all objections—and by his superior knowledge of the subject, his practical clearness, and personal influence, carried the great majority of the Assembly with him. A resolution was passed that questions of war and peace were to be settled by the National Assembly, after an express proposition of the king, and under his sanction.

In the undoubted state of feeling which prevailed in the National Assembly, this was tantamount to a declaration, that France would carry on no war of aggression against Holland and England. This reacted upon Prussia to such a degree, that the King at last resolved on more serious demonstrations against Austria; he therefore stationed one army on the Lithuanian frontier against Russia, and a second in Silesia against Bohemia, and himself repaired to the head quarters of the latter. But his zeal was by no means shared by the allied maritime Powers. There was, indeed, no more question of a Spanish war; the Minister Florida Blanca was greatly dispirited, and announced his submission to the English Ambassador, not, he said, because the claims of England were just, but because Spain was compelled to make a sacrifice. "If France," he added, "would support us, I should hold out, but alone we are too weak and must give way."[1] England, therefore, would have once more had her hands free in the East; but this prospect was far from inducing her to recede from her last engagement with Leopold. The party of peace at any price had by no means obtained a complete victory in France; the subsidies demanded by Montmorin had been granted, and a number of warlike symptoms had begun to show themselves. Pitt, therefore, remained in his peaceable mood towards Austria, and was only animated by the desire of maintaining the tranquility of Europe, that no occasion might be given to France to threaten the Netherlands again.

Leopold, assured of the support of the maritime Powers did his part, with great skill, to further a settlement of the questions, by making up his mind to gratify the pride of Prussia, and apparently allowing himself to be forced to the fulfilment of his most ardent wish. At the end of June, two Austrian diplomatists, Prince Reuss and Baron Spielmann, made their appearance in the Prussian camp, and opened

[1] Morris to Washington, II. 130.

negotiations with Herzberg at Reichenbach, in the most courteous and friendly manner. After Herzberg had explained his scheme of an exchange, the Austrians produced, on the 13th July, a note of their State Chancellor, in which the latter made a counter-proposal coinciding in principle, and differing only in subordinate points, from that of the Prussian minister. Herzberg now considered that he had attained the realisation of his plans. But on the same day, the Ambassadors of the maritime Powers arrived, and protested, in the most emphatic manner, against the execution of any such treaty. They declared that their league had for its sole object the maintenance of the full *status quo ante* in every quarter, and added that England had already negociated on this understanding at Vienna, and was determined not to engage in any war for any other purpose. At the same time the Prussian Ambassador, Marquis Lucchesini, arrived from Warsaw. He informed them that there was the strongest feeling in Poland against the cession of Dantzic and Thorn; that in Warsaw, under the present favourable circumstances, the passions of men were highly excited; that the Russian party, in order to injure Prussia, had carried a resolution through the Diet, which declared every cession of territory to be high-treason; and that even the friends of Prussia thought that the King ought to procure for them the whole of Galicia, at least, in return for those two fine cities. These incidents had a most powerful effect on King Frederick William II. His original ardour had passed away; and much as he liked to form vigorous resolutions in a fit of rash enthusiasm, he was little inclined pertinaciously to adhere to them on merely reasonable grounds. He had lived 40 years apart from all business, sound knowledge, and the discipline of labour. His lively temperament had impelled him to compensate himself for these deficiencies in excitements of every kind; but he soon found himself wearied and *blasé*; complained of the desolation of his monotonous and fatiguing life; and very soon accustomed himself, even as King, to

treat political, as well as all other affairs, as a mere means of intellectual excitement.[1] Nothing more quickly decided him in favour of a measure than its being of a nature to beget an exalted state of feeling; and nothing wearied him more than the accurate objective calculation which is the soul of all practical policy. As difficulties accumulated in Reichenbach, he was easily convinced that Herzberg had involved him in altogether unnecessary difficulties. He was of opinion that the English view of the matter was, on the whole, highly honourable for Prussia also. The glory of having dictated a peace to three Emperors, as the umpire of Europe, appeared to him still greater if Austria received nothing, than if it made an exchange; and the honour to Prussia of such a treaty, all the more dazzling, the less it was sullied by any selfish grasping at Dantzic and Thorn. The King gave himself up to these feelings with the greatest ardour, without the least suspicion that a ruler is violating his duty, if he indulges an enthusiastic feeling at the cost of the State entrusted to him. Herzberg received express orders to reject the proposals of Prince Kaunitz for an exchange, and to insist on the maintenance of the strict *status quo ante*. The Austrian Ambassadors affected thereupon to be frightened and indignant, and the King told Herzberg that they must prepare to fight for the good cause. Herzberg only shook his head mournfully, and hardly eight days had passed before the king himself was surprised by Leopold's ready and zealous assent.[2] Austria hereby gave up all her conquests, and promised to Belgium a general amnesty, and a restoration of her ancient legal constitution. Prussia on her side ceased from her efforts to get possession of Dantzic, and promised to guarantee the Austrian rule in Belgium. The only point which Herzberg could carry was a clause, that if Austria should make any small ac-

[1] Letters of Madame Charrière, a friend of the Countess Döhnhof, *Revue de Genève, 1849.* — [2] Herzberg, *Précis* in "Schmidt's Journal" I. 27.

quisition on the frontiers of Turkey, she would award a similar advantage to Prussia.

The American ambassador in Paris, Morris, who was a strict conservative, and if not exactly a trained statesman, was, at any rate, a practical one, wrote on this occasion to his Government as follows: "Prussia, although she has dictated the conditions of the treaty of Reichenbach, has been completely duped." And indeed it soon became apparent how much the disinterestedness of her King had given up.[1] His influence sank in every quarter, in the same degree as that of Leopold rose. For some weeks, Austria still kept within the limits of the treaty of Reichenbach. She concluded an armistice with the Turks, was willing to open a Peace-Congress, and arranged the recovery of Belgium, at the Hague, in common with Prussia, Holland and England. This was the time which Leopold needed for the consolidation of his position at home. He had to secure his election as Emperor, and since the formation of the League of Princes, Prussia had a majority in the College of Electors. It is true, that Prussia had promised him her vote at Reichenbach, but several of the conditions of his election remained unsettled. And now the first consequences of the Reichenbach policy were seen, when Saxony refused any longer to follow the lead of Prussia, and resumed its old cry of perfect neutrality. This once more turned the scale in favour of Austria, and all proposals for the reform of the *Capitulation* were defeated by the majority, composed of Bohemia, Bavaria, Cologne and Treves, against Brandenburg, Hanover and Mayence. It was a matter of no less moment, that, at the same time, Leopold, in spite of great opposition, secured his recognition in Hungary. In this case too, he acted on the principle which characterised his whole government. While Joseph had endeavoured to destroy all the provincial privileges and Estates, for the advantage of the whole

[1] More fully shown in Hacusser's *Deutsche Geschichte*, I. 322—339.

Empire, Leopold restored the Estates to life, but reserved their most substantial privileges to himself. In Hungary, especially, he found the means most effectual which have been used with such effect in our own times; he roused the Illyrians and Southern Sclavonians against the Magyars, and by their help succeeded in obtaining the crown with all the prerogatives possessed by Maria Theresa. Having succeeded thus far, he pushed forward without hesitation in all directions, even beyond the limits—wherever he could safely do so—drawn at the treaty of Reichenbach. His troops advanced against Belgium, which was ill prepared for resistance, in consequence of its intestine divisions. The Prussian officers, of whom we spoke above, now quitted the service of the Belgian Congress, and the pressure exercised by Austria soon became so strong, as to call forth threats and protests from the maritime Powers in the Conferences at the Hague. But the opportunity for serious resistance was past. The Austrian Minister, Count Mercy, took no notice of any reservations, but pushed forward his troops without delay. Their party divisions had moreover deprived the Belgians of French support, since the Congress of Brussels had, shortly before, proceeded against the democratic leaders, and refused, in spite of Lafayette's representations, to set them free. It was of no avail that the latter sent Dumouriez, expressly on this errand, to Brussels, and offered French assistance against Austria as the price of their liberation. The Congress was immovable, and was therefore on the worst terms with Lafayette, when General Bender with 30,000 Austrians began his operations. Lafayette had no idea of disturbing the peace of Europe for the sake of such hardened sinners; and the Austrian rule was restored in Belgium without a blow.

The subjection of Liège to the dominion of its Bishop immediately followed. Prussia had hitherto energetically supported the entirely just cause of the inhabitants. In Belgium and Hungary she had only operated in secret, and

by means of non-official agents; but in the affairs of Liège she had come forward openly and officially, and was all the more justified in looking for consideration on the part of Austria, when the Liège Estates declared themselves ready to receive their Bishop again, if he would confirm their hereditary privileges. But the Austrian troops now marched into the city, and the opposition was crushed by military force, without any regard to the protests of Prussia.

The results of the treaty of Reichenbach were still more glaringly displayed in the East of Europe. Sweden, which had commenced a war against Russia, in reliance on English and Prussian aid, concluded an unfruitful peace in bitter disappointment. The patriotic party in Poland passed completely out of the sphere of Prussian influence. After their unwise obstinacy in the matter of Dantzic, they had good reason to doubt of the future friendship of Prussia; and after their late experience, they might well consider an alliance with Austria[1] both safer and more profitable. And lastly, even the Turkish Peace-Congress could not be got together; Russia, which was now hard pressed by England and Prussia, made large offers to Austria for a renewal of her alliance; and Kaunitz was of opinion, that if the Prussians attacked Russia, the Emperor of Austria was not prevented from affording assistance to his Russian ally, by the terms of the Reichenbach treaty, which only related to the Turks. Leopold indeed refused to listen to this suggestion, as a promise had been made at Reichenbach not to take part, either directly or indirectly, in the Turkish war; but the English and Prussian Ambassadors had to wait in Sistowa[2] to the very last day of the year, before their Austrian colleagues arrived. We shall presently see how unfavourable was the aspect which affairs then assumed.

So far were the differences of the European Powers from

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[1] "Decline of Prussian influence," in *Hamburger Politisch Journal.* Sept. 1790. — [2] From Dec. 19th—30th.

being brought to a satisfactory conclusion in the year 1790. Russia still filled her neighbours with anxiety and wrath by the din of war, which she still continued to wage against Turkey. Austria, which, with rare good fortune, had escaped the danger of utter annihilation, and obtained an extraordinary increase of power, endeavoured to make use of her advantages, with ever-increasing eagerness. In spite of her new friendship with Prussia, she had not forgotten how much the Prussian influence had contributed to the disturbances in her unruly provinces. Leopold laid it up in his heart, and did not allow himself to be diverted from his proceedings in this direction, even by the increasing uproar of the French Revolution.[1] And, on the other side, the feelings of the King of Prussia were all the more embittered by this conduct of his ally, because he was conscious of having been actuated by pure motives in the Reichenbach treaty. While he heard himself accused of treachery, by Hungary, Brussels and Liège, he was treated with contempt by the Poles, and discovered that his confidence in Austria had been utterly misplaced.

[1] Morris to Washington, Nov. 22. No doubt from communications made to him by the French ministers.

CHAPTER III.

FRANCE.

FALL OF THE CLERGY AND NOBILITY.

DISTURBANCES IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE DECREES AGAINST THE CHURCH.—CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF THE CLERGY.—THE JACOBINS AGITATE AGAINST FOREIGN POWERS.—ATTEMPTS TO EXCITE MUTINY AMONG THE SOLDIERS.—CONSTITUTION OF THE ARMY.—MILITARY TUMULTS.

WHILST the seeds of a general war were springing up in many parts of Europe, and Austria was raising her arm against Prussia,—Prussia against Russia—and England against Spain—the atmosphere, charged with warlike electricity, acted mightily in heating the passions let loose by the Revolution. Of course we do not mean by this, what the Revolutionists have so often affirmed, that the French people, threatened by a league of old Europe, was obliged to have recourse to extremities to preserve its national independence. A simple statement of the facts of German history in 1790 is sufficient to show the impossibility of such a league. But that which did not exist in the external world was engendered in the minds of men. When a universal conflagration seemed every moment ready to break out in East and West, in North and South, men considered their own domestic existence imperilled, and, only too readily, drew a conclusion from their own wishes, with regard to the sentiments of their supposed opponents. On occasion of those half diplomatic, half revolutionary, preparations for war for the protection of Spain, Lameth cried out, "This is a war of all Kings against all Peoples." The whole matter was expressed

by these words; the French felt so strong an impulse within themselves to revolutionize the other nations of Europe, that they could not but pre-suppose an equally active hostility towards themselves on the part of the European Governments.

It so happened, moreover, that, in the same month of May, the opposition to the Revolution in France itself, for the first time, descended from the Parliament and the Court to the people, and appealed to force of arms. The fiercer anxieties and passions of civil war, were added to the excitement against foreign powers; and it was the unhappy Church question which kindled this destructive flame.

The confiscation of Church property had immediately produced very serious consequences. We have seen that, in a financial point of view, it was more than doubtful whether the State, after paying the expenses of the Church from public funds, would derive any advantage from the Ecclesiastical booty. Whether in political and religious respects it is to be regarded as an advantage that the Church should be supported by the State, rather than by its own property, is a question which a prudent observer will decline to decide; since the answer must necessarily depend on the peculiar nature of the people, the state, and the times. In France, at that period, there was reason enough to change the existing system; for since the King gave away all the livings, the possession of property, instead of investing the Church with natural advantages of dignified independence, only brought with it the evils of wealth, luxury and worldliness. The whole course of the Revolution, moreover, was once for all directed against exclusive corporations; we may easily conceive, therefore, that it did not spare the already deeply fallen Church, but subjected it entirely, by a system of payment, to the new-born state. It was still a great violation of law, and a bad pecuniary speculation; but strong arguments could be brought forward in its favour, and it may even be regarded as unavoidable.

But they did not stop here; they began immediately to sell the new State properties singly, and thereby raised a great number of politico-economical difficulties: In the next place, an intention was openly announced of re-modelling the *constitution* of the Church,—which is itself, to a catholic, an object of faith—an announcement which naturally stirred the religious conscience of the nation to its very depths. We shall see how fearfully the movement thus begun was embittered by stupid fanaticism and priestly love of power; yet the National Assembly is not thereby acquitted of the charge of either deep ignorance, or grievous disregard, of the condition of their country. It soon appeared that they had left the ground where their authority, supported by the claims of the nation and the age, was unassailable. They might have destroyed the Clergy, as the first Order in the feudal State, without any greater resistance than would serve to show the weakness of the conquered party. But they had no sooner laid hands on the Clergy in their character of representatives of a faith deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, than civil war broke out in a hundred parts of the Kingdom.[1] Men had yet to learn that behind the enlightened orators of the clubs, and the godless mobs of the capital, there existed in one half of the country a population of peasants, who clung with immoveable tenacity and warlike ardour to the Church of their fathers. They were able to judge from past experience whether this resistance was to be despised. That the last efforts of the *ancien régime* had so utterly failed, and that a new era had been so triumphantly inaugurated, was owing, we have seen—not to the speeches in the Palais Royal, nor even to the storming of the Bastille, but to the general outbreak of the peasants in the country districts, and their universal desertion from the regiments. In their rude zeal, they had declared energetically enough what they wanted; they pos-

[1] Louis Blanc, B. IV. ch. 11, takes the same view of the matter.

sessed it now, and felt able to defend it against the world. They would have expelled the Ecclesiastical tithe-owner, sword in hand; but they would not allow the Sacrament to be forced upon them by unconsecrated hands. Their private interest, too, which had hitherto led them to look with favour on the measures of the National Assembly, only tended on this occasion to increase their anxiety and displeasure. We have already observed upon the prevalent error that the chief desideratum of agriculture, at that period, was a partition of the large estates, and an increase in the number of proprietors; what was really wanting was the freedom of the soil from feudal trammels, judicious cultivation and fair arrangements between landowner and tenant. The first of these requisites was already attained; the second could only be slowly learned; and as to the third, the estates of the Clergy had by no means the worst reputation;—on the contrary, their administration was considered to be sensible and regular, and their leases were eagerly sought after. The report, therefore, that this property had changed hands caused a general panic; the tenants were afraid of being ejected by the new purchaser, or oppressed by speculators. In Alsace alone, a petition against the overthrow of the Catholic religion received 21,000 signatures of farmers in three weeks, among whom Catholics, Lutherans and Jews were found in rare agreement. In Bretagne, the Parish priests had hitherto been at the head of the agitation for freedom; and the peasants, oppressed by peculiarly grievous servile bonds, had risen with fury against the Nobility. Now, however, both priests and peasants turned round, and the new communal authorities saw the population unanimously gathering round the recalcitrant Clergy. At first indeed the greatest excitement arose in the South, where the towns also shared in the general indignation; while in a few places the peasants, who had formerly suffered much more from feudalism them their brethren in the North, adhered to the paths of revolution. The Clergy themselves

made the fullest use of their deep and wide-spread influence. Threatening addresses were heard from the pulpits; the confessional served to carry the flames of discord into every family; and long processions of penitent believers filled the streets of the towns with lamentations over the detested sacrilege. The first bloody tumult arose in Nismes, where the existence of a numerous Protestant community, influential from its wealth and education, had roused the minds of the Catholic zealots to the highest pitch of fanatical excitement, ever since the declaration of the political equality of all religious sects. A man named Froment took the lead in the revolt, with the declaration that the Revolution could never be mastered by arguments addressed to the reason; that it was necessary to oppose passion to passion, and to crush the revolutionary movement by the powerful weapons of religion. From this time forward, disturbances were of daily occurrence; the life of the Protestants was no longer safe, and at last a more important collision took place, in which a patriotic regiment of the line was severely handled by the orthodox Burgher-guard and the proletaries. Thereupon a Catholic society was established, which invited the neighbouring Departments to join in a fraternity of Christian faith. In Alais the mob chased the troops out of the town, and the Burgher-Guard, being divided against itself, was unable to interfere. In Montauban, again, there was a fight between the Burgher-Guard and the people, and here, too, the Catholics remained masters of the field, and the Burgher-Guard was dispersed. Amidst these convulsions the Catholics gained ground; in Nismes alone the fraternity was joined by 4,000 men, and Uzès, Perpignan, Tarn and the influential city of Toulouse, soon sent in their adhesion. The complaints of the patriots resounded day by day, and the National Assembly was overwhelmed with more and more gloomy reports from the authorities. Under the erroneous idea that they had only to do with artificially got-up disturbances, they resolved to cut off all the hopes of the

partisans of ancient abuses by completing the work of reform.

On the 29th of May, the new Church constitution—the outlines of which had been published in April,—was laid before the Assembly by the Ecclesiastical Committee. In its full development, it went far beyond the principles laid down in the report of April; and made many other encroachments on the laws of the Church than the alteration of the boundaries of dioceses. The sovereignty of the enfranchised citizens was acknowledged in this case, as in the courts of law, and in the general administration. The electors of each District were to name their Priest, and the electors of the Department their Bishop;[1] the person elected was to swear an oath of allegiance to the Nation, the King and the Constitution. There were to be no more Chapters and no Ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Pope was to forfeit his right of dispensation and canonical investiture. It is true that the dogmatical questions were not immediately touched upon in this scheme, but we need not point out that if it were once carried into execution, there would no longer exist in France for an orthodox Catholic any religious service free from desecration, or any unpolluted Sacrament.

Nevertheless the debate was not to be compared in the warmth of feeling displayed with that of April. The Clergy, who had then formally protested against the obnoxious decrees, now took very little part in the fresh discussion. The contest was almost exclusively carried on by the parties of the Centre and the Left,—and related chiefly to the amount of salary, the continuance of the Chapters, and the election of the Bishops by the people or the Clergy. The real hero of this dry and tedious debate was the Jansenist Camus, who, with a mixture of religious and political zeal, endeavoured to prove the exact agreement of the law before

[1] The only condition of the franchise was attendance at one mass. Every non-catholic who fulfilled it might give a vote.

them, with the new Testament and the synodal decrees of the 4th century. Robespierre, for whom the law was not democratic enough, was less fortunate; and several attempts to introduce the abolition of celibacy entirely failed. In the midst of these half scholastic and half demagogical discussions, the threatening voice of the Catholic South was occasionally heard. On June 15th, the National Assembly received an address, couched in dictatorial terms, from the Association at Nismes, calling upon them to respect the Church and restore the prerogatives of the King. This was also an act of the sovereign people, as much as the Parisian address of October 5th; but the National Assembly answered it in the curtest manner, on the very same day, by a decree for the immediate sale, not of 400 millions' worth only, but of the whole mass of the Church property. The Nismes address, moreover, was declared exciting and seditious, and the ringleaders were cited before the bar of the Assembly, and thus the exasperation on both sides continually increased. This was exactly the juncture at which the new administrative authorities entered upon their functions; no courts of law were as yet in activity, and the army was more and more deeply affected by the general disorders. Every town therefore, was in a state of complete independence; the more important administration of affairs was virtually carried on under the form of voluntary fraternities, and enthusiasm for the National Assembly was the only bond which still held the loose particles together. Now, however, this enthusiasm was changed, through many a wide region, into hatred and abhorrence. Catholic associations were formed in vehement opposition to the patriotic Clubs, and the sovereign towns prepared, as in he times of ancient Gaul, to march into the field. When the struggle in Montauban became known, the freedom-loving Bordeaux rose in fury; the Burgher Guard ran to arms—gathered a small army in the neighbourhood,—and marched out to chastise the rebellious hypocrites. For a long time

the opposing forces lay regularly encamped in sight of one another, and the interference of the Ministry and the National Assembly could with difficulty prevent a collision. In Nismes, on the contrary, a dreadful catastrophe took place in the middle of June. The partizans of Froment came to blows with the protestants, and a number of individuals were murdered; then the protestants received reinforcements from the liberal catholics of the town, and fellow-believers of the surrounding villages. The interference of the troops of the line decided the contest in favour of the Liberals, and above eight hundred of the clerical party were cut down with revengeful cruelty.[1]

In fact while the laws respecting the Civil and Judicial Administration had freed the passions of men from every outward bond, the decrees against the Church placed weapons in their hands for open war. In the midst of the Revolution, a civil war rose against the Revolution itself; and the revolutionary leaders were nothing loath to enter into this contest, which afforded them fresh means of rousing the fanaticism of their adherents. In opposition to the theological zeal of the orthodox Catholics, they invoked the patriotism of all true Frenchmen. The Catholic Priests, who had a year before united themselves by hundreds with the *tiers état*, had indeed nothing in common with the Lords and Princes who were begging aid for the feudal system in foreign countries; but the Revolution, after persecuting both parties with equal fury, was delighted to be able to direct the general abhorrence felt towards traitors to their country against the Catholic Church.

The Jacobins had never allowed the subject of foreign interference, which they had first broached on the 5th October, to die away again. If it had been a question of wishes and inclinations alone, they would have had good

[1] Louis Blanc, B. IV. ch. 11, who derives his information from the minutes of the law-suit subsequently carried on in respect to these proceedings.

reason for all they said; for there was no lack of voices calling upon the existing Powers of Europe, to guard and to fight against the Revolution. In the front rank of these, were, of course, the French *Emigrés*, who besought every Court in turn for an armed intervention, and declaimed upon the incompatibility of a revolutionised France with the ancient order of the world. Their natural chief was the Count d'Artois, the King's brother, who had fled from Paris after the storming of the Bastille. Since that time, he had lived, with his father-in-law, the King of Sardinia; and from that retreat he importuned his friends in France, as well as every foreign Power, with his petitions for help. Complaints from other quarters reached the German Diet on the part of certain German Princes who had posessions in Alsace, and were affected by the decrees of August. In support of their formal right they appealed to an article of the Peace of Westphalia, which guaranted the existing rights of the Imperial Estates of Alsace. On the other side, France quoted another article from the same treaty, according to which, this guarantee was given without prejudice to the full sovereignty of the King, and Alsace, therefore, was also subjected to French legislation.[1] However much the lawyers might differ on this question, it was one which in a political point of view ought evidently to be settled by a peaceable compromise; and Mirabeau carried a decree in the National Assembly, which invited the Alsatian Princes to negociate a compensation. This disagreement, however, tended to increase the dissatisfaction with which the higher classes in Germany watched the progress of French disturbances. A sensitiveness of this kind was natural enough among those States of the Empire whose whole existence still rested on a feudal basis. The Prelates and Knights of the Empire, and other little Potentates, found themselves entirely in the position of those Frenchmen against whom the first blows

[1] Instr. pacis Monast. Sec. 73, 74, 87.

of the Revolution had been struck. The more powerful Princes, however, were in a different position; the majority of them being protestant, they would have been able to look on at the fate of the French Church with greater indifference. Having been for many ages at war with their own Nobility, and following in the main the policy of progress and the public weal, they might even have seen in the decrees of the 4th of August the victory of their own cause. But the folly of Breteuil, and the weakness of Louis—which in spite of the real nature of the case involved the Monarchy in the defeat of the Feudal Estates—together with the anarchical and world-embracing character of the "Rights of man," entirely changed these sentiments. After the horrors of the 6th of October, the Monarchs of Europe naturally considered their own existence endangered by the Revolution, and looked with favour on all its victims, almost without distinction. In their case, an internal revolution of thought and feeling took place, analogous to the external revolution in France. The blindness of the Feudal party rendered the rise of an aggressive radicalism possible, by which those natural allies—a national Monarchy, and a liberal policy directed to the public good—were entirely estranged from one another.

Yet there was still a wide interval between the alienation of hearts and active hostilities. The Courts of Europe were enraged at the insolence of the Parisian revolutionists, but most of them felt as much contempt as anger, and all were fully occupied by the Austrian troubles. Even at Turin, though the King of Sardinia expressed his wishes for the success of his illustrious son-in-law—whose gallantries, by the way, disagreeably disturbed the dignified decorum of his Court—he showed not the slightest inclination to endanger his own interests by a French war. The zeal of the Count d'Artois was always grasping at shadows; and his failure with the other Powers was still more decided. Nay, even in the Tuileries—though they still kept up a communication with the Count in order to learn what he was doing—the

Queen, without whose knowledge the King undertook nothing of importance, was very far from agreeing to his plans. On the one hand she dreaded the danger which the Royal family must incur in Paris, during an attack of the *Emigrés*, and on the other hand she was anxious about her own fate, in the case of their success; especially since Calonne had gained favour and influence with the Count d'Artois. The men of deeper insight, who foresaw the final victory of anarchical Democracy from the past career of the Revolution, deplored even at that time the sluggishness of the crowned heads. Not that they wished for a universal war with modern France, or the destruction of reform, but because they had no doubt that the victorious Democracy would assume the aggressive, and render a general war inevitable. They directed attention to the intrigues of Lafayette in Ireland, Holland and Belgium; to the zeal with which the *Emigrés* of Geneva and Liége thronged round Mirabeau and other party chiefs; to the official tendency of the "Rights of man," which assumed to be the only valid public law, not only of France but of the whole world. The only question with them was, when the contest should begin, and with what resources it should be conducted; and it therefore seemed clear to them that every delay could only increase the powers of anarchy.

But if the Courts, in the midst of their Turkish troubles, did not at all concern themselves, as to whether Marie Antoinette restrained her husband from all participation in the plans of his brother, how many people in Paris, can we suppose, were aware of these domestic and diplomatic intricacies, or were inclined to believe in them? Every remark which a democratic newspaper threw out concerning the plans of the foreign tyrants set fire to a thousand inflammable hearts. The majority of Frenchmen were so utterly ignorant of foreign affairs, that it was very easy to make them believe the most ridiculous inventions. Sometimes a blow was to be dealt against Lyons, sometimes against Mar-

seilles; now it was the Emperor, now Catharine II., who were in league with the *Emigrés;* to-day England was represented as conspiring with d'Artois against the Revolution, and to-morrow with Orleans against Louis XVI.—and all to revenge herself for the American war. Thus the whole soil seemed undermined with treachery, and the atmosphere poisoned by conspiracies; no crime was so clumsy, or so crafty, as not to be imputed to the Reactionists. While these matters were continually painted in the most glaring colours, and the actual intrigues of the Count d'Artois were well known and beyond a doubt, the demagogues succeeded within a few months in filling the mass of the people with painful anxiety and unbounded pride. Strong national feeling, lively imagination, and infinite credulity, combined, and quickly roused far and wide among the people, first, the consciousness of being persecuted by all kings, and, secondly, the wish to procure freedom for all peoples. A year before they had been proud of being the only free people on the Continent; they now began to extend the horizon of the Revolution far beyond all the boundaries of the Kingdom.

The state of military affairs presented the readiest means of changing these feelings into action; for against foreign Powers, the army alone could afford protection. But it was feared that the officers, who belonged without exception to the Noblesse, would place themselves at the head of the traitors. The factions in Paris were well aware of what importance the opinions of the army were to them; and the Jacobins never for a moment ceased to work upon the minds of the soldiers. Their efforts were only too well backed by the faults of the French military system, which showed themselves more incurable every day. Officers and soldiers stood opposed to one another as members of classes separated by a deep abyss, and were mutually animated by a deadly hostility. Nowhere was the hatred between the Nobility and the Commonalty fiercer than here; and while elsewhere

the standing army is regarded as the strongest bulwark of order, in France, at that time, Feudalism had in no quarter so greatly facilitated the task of the demagogues as among the soldiers. The non-commissioned officers, almost without exception, held radical opinions; and the officers themselves were divided, some having been convinced by the Revolution of the necessity of reform, and others still more hardened against it. In the course of the winter, the club-system was introduced into the regiments; each had its own committee of non-commissioned officers as centre of the movement, and the first subjects discussed were higher pay, security against embezzlement, easier promotion and milder discipline. They sent up deputations to their colonels to discuss these points, or even directly to the National Assembly and the Minister at war; they demanded an account of the military chest from the colonels, and refused to acknowledge superior officers of aristocratic and illiberal opinions. The officers were obliged to look on, and to soothe and flatter their men; whenever they attempted resistance the soldiers resorted to open violence, and the Communal authorities continually interfered in matters relating to military discipline. When the confederation began to be formed in the provinces, all these evils were greatly exaggerated; the troops were allured by the festivities and enthusiasm displayed, and the National Assembly, which could not accustom itself to look on the army as anything else than a tool of power, expressly recommended the fraternization of the soldiers and the National Guard, as equal sons of a common country. By this intercourse of the two sections of the armed force the discipline of the army was completely destroyed. The soldiers saw no reason why they should have less freedom than their free brethren; or more limited rights, than other members of the sovereign people. They found that the National Guard, without any penal laws, and with the privilege of choosing their officers, did good service to the Commonwealth; and they argued, that as the Declaration of Rights

allowed of no inequality, but such as the public good demanded, there was no reason why they should be subject to severer regulations, and not be allowed to select their officers. And thus things soon came to such a pass that the disorders of the new system were worse than the abuses of the old.

Under these circumstances, the National Assembly began the work of reform, by reserving certain questions, very important to officers and soldiers, for their own sole decision; and they thereby accustomed the army to look to them more than to the King. "We cannot be sure," said Alexander Lameth, "that a liberally minded king will always rule in France." The Assembly, therefore, resolved that the legislative body had the exclusive right to determine the numbers and regulations of the army—the disposal of it in the Kingdom —the pay of all ranks—the mode of recruiting—the reception of foreign soldiers—and the military code of punishment. Lameth was himself an officer, and beside him were a number of young associates, who looked forward with burning zeal to a grand career in a revolutionary army. Among these were the Duke of Orleans' friend Biron, the hotheaded Menou, Lafayette's associates, Broglie and Montmorency, the aged Custine, brave, thoughtless and vain as the youngest of them—and, lastly, the most radical of all, Dubois de Crancé, who joined to his democratic ardour a ferocious spirit of revenge against the old system, under which the Minister of war, St. Germain, had formerly turned him out of the service. All these men were eager to popularize the army; the pay of the common soldiers was raised—access to the rank of officer was opened to all who displayed the necessary talent—and the soldier's civil rights were reserved to him for the time when he was not on active service.

But as nothing was done simultaneously with these pleasant concessions for the restoration of discipline, and the charges against the reactionary and treacherous sentiments of the officers were perseveringly repeated, the demoralization of the army rose, during the Spring, to an alarming

height. Both the people and the soldiers were convinced that the officers would desert to the enemy on the very first attack made by the *Emigrés;* and it therefore seemed mere treason to the country not to be beforehand with them, or to leave them in their present position, especially in the frontier garrisons. Whoever wished to raise a tumult could not imagine a more fruitful theme. In the beginning of May—at the same time that the Church disturbances were going on in the interior—the flame of mutiny blazed along the whole Sardinian border. That systematic agitation was at work is evident from the fact that the risings were announced beforehand to the Jacobins of Paris;[1] but there was also something more than conspiracy, *viz.* a wide-spread popular feeling—especially in the rural districts—which eagerly played into the hands of the revolutionary leaders. The people simultaneously stormed the forts[2] at Marseilles, the citadels at Grenoble and Montpelier, and the arsenal at Toulon, in order to arm themselves, and to put to shame the plans of internal and external traitors. The local authorities were powerless, and the National Assembly for a long time wavered; at last they issued decrees in favour of order, which were, however, too weak to produce any real effect, and, moreover, came too late.

Such was the position of things at home, when the news of Nootka Sound brought the possibility of a war clearly before the eyes of the National Assembly. The excitement which it caused is now doubly easy to us to understand. The dreadful phantoms which an uncontrolled imagination

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[1] Louis Blanc makes no mention of this; but on the other hand he speaks of a Royalist plot of Marshal Maillebois, which amounted to nothing more than a plan of this unsteady and restless officer for concocting an armed Counter-revolution at the Courts of Turin, Madrid and the Hague. — [2] In Marseilles there had been great dissension since 1789 between the Military and the Civilians; the quarrels in this city gave Mirabeau and C. Lameth occasion to abolish the jurisdiction of the *Grand-Prevôts* Poisson, I. 208.

had hitherto created, seemed suddenly to acquire a crushing reality. It was hardly without some personal anxiety that Lameth exclaimed, that it was now a question of a war between kings and peoples. When therefore the supposed danger was past, it was quite in accordance with human nature, that the suspicions against the King, the Noblesse and the Officers should be renewed in an increased degree; for much as the Jacobins feared war, they derived great advantages from warlike rumours. At every repetition of the assertion, that the Kings were forming a league against freedom, a look of distrust fell upon Louis XVI. Every fear of an attack of the *Emigrés* enhanced the irritation against the aristocratic officers. Foreign propaganda, hatred of nobility; and military insubordination, acted and reacted upon one another. It was just at this time that the city of Lyons gave an example on a large scale of one of those fraternizations, which at that time so frequently took place; more than 50,000 National Guards, amid festive pageantry, swore fidelity to the Constitution, the National Assembly and the King. This occurrence gave rise to the idea in Paris of uniting all France by a single oath at a sublime festival, to be celebrated on the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. It was proposed to assemble representatives of all the Departments, National Guards and other forces, on the Champ de Mars, and thereby to give a new impulse to revolutionary enthusiasm and harmony. The proposition had scarcely been made when it was taken up with the greatest enthusiasm. The King and the National Assembly sanctioned it, and all parties endeavoured beforehand to turn it to their own purposes. The most heterogeneous negociations were brought into connection with it, and, as we may easily conceive, the Jacobins were not behindhand. The foregoing remarks will serve to place the following events in their proper light.

After the union of the three Orders, and the night of the 4th of August, had deprived the Church and the Noblesse of

their political privileges, the ancient constitution of the former was on the point of being completely abolished. It seemed therefore nothing more than consistent to proceed in the same way against the second of the ancient Orders—the Noblesse. When this idea was first broached is unknown, but the immediate authors of it, as far as we can see, were the nobly-born chiefs of the Jacobins, Lameth, Aiguillon and St. Fargeau. On this occasion, they had no reason to fear any opposition from Lafayette; he remembered how dangerous the contest on the war question had been to his popularity, and on this point be heartily agreed with all the conclusions of the Jacobins. As early as the 4th July, Mirabeau found him and his more intimate friends full of ardour[1] for the abolition of Nobility and Orders, and he made them feel the force of his derision at their enthusiasm on such a subject. A fortnight later, all the world was full of preparations for the Festival of Fraternity; and on the 19th a deputation from a Committee of Foreigners, was sent up to the National Assembly, to beg for admission to the Festival. Hereupon the Prussian Baron Cloots, as spokesman for the human race, brought a number of persons into the Hall, dressed in all the national costumes of the theatrical wardrobes in Paris—[2] thundered against the powerful of the earth—introduced the representatives of all nations, and called on France to give the signal for the liberation of two worlds! Loud plaudits arose from all sides, and the President granted the desired permission, under the significant condition that they should make known in their own homes what they had witnessed on the free soil of France. This farce was thought to be a worthy prelude to the proper business of the evening. If foreign nations were present, Lameth said, propriety demanded that the fettered images of conquered nations should be re-

[1] "*Très épouffés.*" Letter to La Marck s. h. d. — [2] To disprove this Louis Blanc cites a public declaration of the Baron, that his Turk and Chaldean were learned Orientalists well known at the Royal Library and the Collège.

moved from the front of Louis XIV.'s statue. It was time, said another, to banish all marks of pride and arrogance, from a land of natural freedom and equality. All titles of nobility, cried the otherwise unknown deputy Lambel, ought to be abolished. The decisive words had been spoken; Lameth and Lafayette rose together and struggled for the rostra in order to express their emphatic assent. The zealous and at last tumultuous opposition of the Right was fruitless, and the decree was carried by acclamation, amidst the thunders of the galleries.

We have no intention of repeating here all that may be said on the subject of this debate, in the case of an ideal, or a newly-founded State. Historical experience, the final judge, has decided that in France, or any other old nation, an existing nobility cannot be abolished by a law, but only gradually remodelled by a change of social relations. All that was at that period possible in France, in this respect, was fully attained by opening to merit the way to every honour—by establishing perfect equality before the law and by emancipating the soil. The decree of the 19th of June had, and could have, no other consequences than to increase the number and exasperation of the enemies of the Revolution. It is in every respect a parallel case with the civil constitution of the Clergy; as the latter, without a shadow of formal or actual right, proclaimed the omnipotence of the State over the existing religious belief,—the former did the same with respect to the prevailing notions of morality and honour. However desirable the object of one of these laws may seem to men of anti-catholic views, and the tendency of the other, to the partisans of democracy, there can be no doubt that the National Assembly violated the eternal rule, that the provisions of a law must be adapted to the particular people for whom it is intended, or it will never be regarded by them as a sacred authority. The Noblesse and the Clergy had, up to this time, made a sacrifice of their privileges to the Revolution, and that, too, not merely on

compulsion. It was just the most pious of the Bishops, the most honoured of the Parish Priests, and the ablest of the Noblesse, who had taken part in the Revolution with disinterested enthusiasm. Even those who suffered from its excesses a hundred times acknowledged that they had no right to complain, if their Order now suffered the consequences of its errors. But by the late decrees, these Orders obtained the incalculable power of a good conscience in their contest against the Revolution. Every honourable man amongst them felt himself repelled from a cause, the essential objects of which he had cherished in his heart as much as any of the heroes of the day. Count d'Artois' *Emigrés* had indeed great reason to rejoice at measures which brought a number of elements into their league, nine-tenths of which would have otherwise defended, at the cost of property and life, the advantages gained on the 14th of July. The Jacobins, too, might well rejoice, since they wished to render the re-establishment of any kind of order impossible. But nothing can surpass the blindness of the vain and shallow man, who was for ever talking about order while scattering destruction around him with ostentations good humour;— we mean of course General Lafayette.

In the midst of all these occurrences, the long debate on the civil constitution of the Clergy was indefatigably carried on. The result was easily foreseen; the discussion ended on the 12th of July,[1] in the same spirit in which it had begun, and sealed the civil war in France.

Two days later, the grand Fraternization of the French People was celebrated. Who would venture to doubt of the patriotic sentiments, and the genuine enthusiasm, of the thousands who had here met together from the Pyrenees, the Rhine, and the Ocean; and saw in their own honest hopes a guarantee for the future! But it would require a more innocent world than that in which we live, to rear a

[1] Adopted by the Assembly as a whole on the 24th July.

State, and close a revolution, with enthusiasm and hopes alone. One fact, however, was clearly and indisputably brought to light on that second 14th of July; that while the acquisition of the former summer—the overthrow of feudalism—was the result of the general agreement, and the most active efforts, of the whole of France, the impending victories of the anarchical party, on the contrary, could only be rendered possible by the general negligence and weakness of the people. The doctrines of the Parisian democracy had no more place among the representatives of the Feast of Fraternity, than they had formerly in the *cahiers* of the electors. Amidst the general joy and triumph, this party found itself alone; their journals, half enraged and half depressed, made the discovery that the festival had been invented to spread royalism through France. "It was intended," cried Marat, "to amuse the people with childish games, and then to throw them into chains."—"The *Fédérés*," said Loustalôt, "came to Paris as Spartans, and left it as Sybarites and Helots;"[1] they had, indeed, gathered round Lafayette, and were never weary of shouting "Long live Louis XVI.!"

But the democracy had soon reason enough to put away its fears; the dazzling and jubilant festival was soon over, while the strife of parties and the destructive principles and regulations remained. New reports continually arose of conspiracies hostile to freedom; the Jacobins spoke more and more definitely of the impending intervention of the Germans; and day after day the hatred of parties broke out in the National Assembly, in the press, and among the masses of people, with ever-increasing fury. In a placard headed "It is all over with us," Marat announced the approach of the German armies, which, he said, were favoured by the Court. He demanded the imprisonment of the King and Queen, and the execution of five or six hundred enemies of freedom; whereupon the National Assembly, after a stormy

[1] *Rev. de Paris 1790*, N. 156. *Ami du peuple* N. 166.

debate, gave orders for the criminal prosecution of Marat. On the other hand, the Government caused the Court of the Chatelet to bring forward the results of their investigation of the events of the 6th of October; and the passionate excitement of the Assembly rose to the highest pitch, when two members of the House, Orleans and Mirabeau, were designated—with what degree of truth we know—as the originators of the outrage. In the debate which followed, the opposing parties almost came to blows; the Cavaliers of the Right began at the same time systematically to force the leaders of the liberal parties into duels, by insults of every kind; and were, on that account, branded by the opposition press as murderous banditti. Of far more consequence than these private quarrels—which, though they characterised the heated feelings of the Assembly, had no practical results—was the circumstance, that in one of the most important institutions of the State—the army—the long existing divisions were infinitely widened and envenomed by the law for the abolition of Nobility. Most of the officers had now really become, what they had been hitherto only suspected of being, decided enemies of the Revolution. "That decree," wrote Mirabeau, has kindled the torch and forged the weapons of civil war." The increasing anger and self-reliance of the soldiers soon carried them beyond all the bounds of discipline. The democratic press did its part, and Marat especially was indefatigable in stirring up the soldiers to open mutiny, and the murder of their treacherous officers. Nor did matters stop at a mere war of words. Intelligence of excesses of ever-increasing atrocity continually arrived in Paris; and demoralization spread in every direction. In one place the soldiers arrested their colonel; in another they drove away a lieutenant; in another a whole garrison refused obedience; and in another several regiments fought out their political quarrels in the streets. However unwilling the Assembly might be to adopt severe measures, they could no longer palliate the dissolute brutality of these proceedings

by the love of political freedom. On the 6th August, they prohibited clubs in the regiments, exhorted the men to a strict observance of the rules of discipline, and ordered an investigation into the management of the regimental chest—which had been an eternal apple of discord between officers and soldiers. To Mirabeau's energetic proposal, that the army should be disbanded and thoroughly remodelled, Marat replied in his journal, by saying that the Parisians ought to erect 800 gallows for the supporters of such a scheme, and hang the infamous traitor Mirabeau on the top of it. When the Assembly perceived in what a darling question of the Parisian demagogues they were about to meddle, they timidly drew back, and allowed the question to drop. A fortnight afterwards the storm broke out. Three whole regiments mutinied at Nancy, in consequence of a fresh quarrel about the military chest; and being joined by some armed proletaries made themselves masters of the town, with every prospect of being joined by the neighbouring garrisons. Anarchy was now seen in its most brutal and degraded form, as the mere desire of licence without any kind of ideal or political aim. The National Assembly hesitated; for what could decrees or proclamations do in such a position of affairs? In this case, the matter was decided by the rapidity and energy of General Bouillé, an able and courageous officer, who had acquired a brillant reputation in the American war by his defence of the French Antilles in 1778. In spite of his strict military habits, he had won the affections even of the citizens in the garrison town of Metz, by his firmness and resolution.[1] After the Government and the National Assembly had ordered the suppression of the revolt, he collected all the trustworthy troops in the province—composed chiefly of Germans, Swiss, and cavalry regiments—which, with a few hundred National Guards, made up a force of about 3000 men. Having intimidated a portion of the rebels by

[1] Poisson, I, 248.

his proud and calm superiority, he overthrew the rest with terrible carnage; one of the mutinous regiments was utterly destroyed with the exception of 40 men.

The National Assembly, who saw that the popular movement had got beyond their control, passed a vote of thanks to the General in spite of the opposition of Robespierre. But before their own doors, and under the windows of the Tuileries, the mob was raging, demanding with wild cries the dismissal of the blood-stained Ministers, and proclaiming a new and grander Revolution.

The National Assembly too quickly returned to its old tracks. The above mentioned catastrophe quickened the desire for some legal organization, and here, too, the mistrust of every thing which could give power or influence to the Government decided their course. It is true that the code of discipline, which was completed on the 14th of September, was composed throughout of sensible regulations. But there were two other decrees calculated to undermine afresh the order which had been established under the influence of momentary fear. By one of these the greatest part of the patronage was taken out of the hands of the King, and only the nomination of the Marshals and Commanders-in-chief was left to him. In the other grades, length of service was to decide in the majority of cases; while the nomination of a new non-commissioned officer was left to the other non-commissioned officers of the company, who presented the ablest man of the ranks to the Captain and the Colonel. They had not yet been quite able to resort to the method of simple election in all grades, from the lowest to the highest, and had, meanwhile, mixed up all kinds of entirely incompatible systems. The second decree related to the military courts. According to this, only military offences were to be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the civil judges; every indictment or information was to be signed by the plaintiff; the charge as well as the sentence to be agreed upon by a special jury; the juries to be formed

of members of all grades, down to that of the defendant, which was to be doubly represented; and lastly, the jurors were to be taken from members of all grades, in regular succession. It was utterly impossible therefore for the higher authorities to exercise the slightest influence on the formation of the court.

We may easily conceive, from what has been said, that though for the present no mutiny occurred like that of Nancy, there was no security for the steadiness and trustworthiness of the army. No colonel could answer for the loyalty and good order of his troops, with the exception of the German and Swiss mercenaries. Moreover, the material as well as the moral excellence of the army declined. It is true, indeed, that in the course of the autumn and winter a new military organization in all its details was decreed; and the principles on which it was founded have maintained a lasting authority. The privileged corps—the old names of regiments—their merely nominal commanders,—the differences in the regulations for different divisions of the army, and the numerous evils in the form of its previous administration,—were all done away with. But the difficulties of the new state of things were not relieved. It was in vain that the Minister at war, De la Tour, represented to the Assembly that the army only numbered 124,000 men,—the anarchy of the last 15 months having caused a deficit of more than 30,000; that the 84 million francs, which had been allotted to the military budget, were entirely insufficient, especially since the very reasonable increase of pay for non-commissioned officers and privates, which had begun on the 1st of May.[1] The National Assembly might give their orders respecting arms and equipments, they might make the necessary grants, and place them at the disposal of the Minister; but

[1] A very complete compilation from the minutes in the *Tableau de la Guerre de la Revolution*, Paris 1803 I. 147—a book which has not been consulted by later French writers nearly as much as it deserves. Further particulars in Poisson, I. 304.

what was the use of all their decrees, while the Treasury was empty, while the Minister was dispirited by the ever-increasing hostility of the Assembly, and checked at every step in all his measures by the insubordination of all the authorities?

The army was now irrevocably alienated from the King, and from any reaction which might have been attempted through him. To attain this end the demagogues had demoralized it, rendered it unserviceable against street riots and outbreaks among the peasantry, and even made its fitness for a foreign war very doubtful. If, however, some gifted General should succeed in uniting and re-animating its crumbling and decaying masses, they would then acknowledge no other authority than that of their favourite leader. By their military measures, the National Assembly left the French people no other choice, than that between military defencelessness and military dictatorship. It is doubly easy for us, of course, to confirm this judgment from the result, but even then the Assembly was not left without a warning. Edmund Burke, the most gifted of the English whigs, who from the beginning of the Revolution had energetically proclaimed the causes of its failure, foretold in October 1790, that it would end in an unconditional military despotism.

CHAPTER IV.

POLITICO-ECONOMICAL AFFAIRS.

Socialist disturbances.—New issues of paper money.—New system of taxation.—Deficit.—Growth of the national debt.—Disorder of affairs in the rural districts.—Jacquerie.—Parcelling out of the large domains.—Administration of Paris.—Ateliers nationaux.—Distribution of bread to the people.—Brief prosperity of manufactures.—Unions among the workmen.—Compulsory raising of wages.—Interference of national assembly.—Agitation.

A religious war and military riots were not all that the summer of 1790 brought with it. To complete the picture of the maladies which raged through the wide kingdom of France, we must include risings among the workmen, and the insurrection of the peasants. It is, perhaps, the most important defect of the histories of the Revolution, that they preserve a deep silence with regard to these occurrences, so that for a long time the proposition was universally received, that the last century only aimed at political changes;—that it was not until the present century that a social revolution was attempted, and that the originator of the socialist movement in France was Babœuf. In the last few years, however, a clearer insight into these matters has been obtained, and several writers have asserted that at any rate the extreme Communists had their prototypes in the Jacobin period of the great Revolution. But, in the first place, the external history of the Revolution would not be sufficiently cleared up by looking at it from this point of view; and in the second, this assertion is in itself far too limited. All the other phases of modern Socialism had likewise their representatives in the last century; and beside the Communists

proper—who desired to transfer everykind of property to the State—we find another party of equal importance who, while they recognised the rights of private property, wished to give the State the actual disposal of it by indirect means. We might even assert that there is not a single proposition of the modern Communistic and Socialistic schools, which was overlooked in the year 1790; all that is new in the last ten years consists in the theoretical proofs and philosophical embellishment of the system. The earlier period of which we are speaking is in every respect instructive to those who would study its effects; we shall therefore enter somewhat into detail, because, from this time forward, there is no important point of the revolutionary history which is not affected by the principles of Communism and Socialism.

When, in the Spring of 1790, the Jacobins declared the Revolution still incomplete, and laboured to keep up the disturbances, there were only two pretexts by which they could gain a following in the country favourable to their wishes.

One of these was the fear of reaction. Many honest men believed that though they were for the moment free enough, they must not allow breathing time to the King, or he would immediately crush their liberties again. The number of these suspicious persons was large, but their activity was not considerable, because at the bottom of their hearts they earnestly desired the restoration of order.

But there were others, and these the most energetic, who understood by the word liberty, the opposite of all government—that is, the power of satisfying every appetite and passion of the heart. In their eyes the Revolution was incomplete as long as any constitution whatever existed in authoritative force; and they regarded every one as reactionary, who endeavoured to establish any constitutional government. These views, the fruits of which we have seen more than enough of in the field of politics, were of course most loudly expressed in regard to politico-economical and social affairs;

for it is in these that the most unruly impulses of the heart —vanity, hunger, and love of pleasure, have their proper element. In questions of politics in the narrower sense, in the forms and powers of government, only the higher passion of ambition is concerned, or those ideal aims, which can only rouse the educated man to great excitement. But the great masses of the lower orders, who alone can give to revolutions their volcanic power, require simpler and stronger stimulants to exertion. There has never been a great revolution that was not either social or religious.

The grand principle of the year 1789 was freedom of labour and of property—equality of State-protection for every workman and every proprietor. Every thing is concluded in this; for if any one wished to add the fraternal union of the workmen, he would immediately remember that such an association can only be the free act of individuals, if it is to remain fraternal and advantageous. This principle was acted upon in the very first month of the National Assembly;—partly in the decrees of the 4th of August, and partly in the permission given to lend out money on interest, by which the operations of the money market received their first legal sanction in France. By these decrees the State renounced the right of interference in matters of production and trade; and the system of free competition, of *laisser faire* and *laisser aller*, was established in France for all future time. These principles were the very opposite to those of Feudalism. The latter regarded political power as the private property of each successive possessor; which, consequently, he was at liberty to use, like any other property, for his private purposes; and by which he could employ the labour of others to his own advantage. The consequence in France had been the exhaustion of the lower classes for the benefit of the higher; and the final result, destitution on one side and demoralisation on the other. These evils were so glaringly palpable that they induced the National Assembly to overthrow the system at once. Unfortunately however a development

took place at the same moment, the consequences of which might prove to the modern opponents of free labour the universal validity of the principles they repudiate. France was about to gain the experience, that every deviation from these principles is punished with equal severity, whether it proceeds from a desire to favour the Prince or the Noblesse, the Capitalist or the Proletary.

No sooner had it been proclaimed, that the possessor of political power must no longer enrich himself at the cost of the people, than the hungry masses remembered that they themselves were now in possession of it. Instead, therefore, of merely denying the principle of Feudalism, they thought of reversing it. If political power had hitherto served to increase the property of the rich, it seemed no more than fair that it should now bring similar advantages to the poor. They therefore claimed not merely freedom of labour, that every man might gain his bread—but equal enjoyments, for which the State must be responsible, even without labour. The State must for the future be strong enough, on the one side, to make itself master of all property with a view of distributing it, and, on the other, to open the access to power widely enough to secure to every proletary the realization of his particular desires. We have seen that this last demand was fully satisfied by the decrees of 1790, since the meanest day labourer possessed greater authority than his Mayor, and the latter far greater power than the Minister of State. But still the enfranchised classes were of some consequence in the country; the laws of *meum* and *tuum* still existed, and many a hard struggle must be gone through before the ideal state of universal enjoyment could be realized. This was the real meaning of the question, whether the Revolution was to be completed or closed at once.

The National Assembly assumed a similar attitude towards the social, as they had previously done to the political question. They were far from wishing to do what the extreme Left required of them, and rejected the community of

goods as decidedly as the Republic. But they allowed themselves to be misled by a false idea of political and politico-economical freedom, to premises, from which the democratic and social Republic—the arbitrary rule of the proletary, and consequently the destruction of property—were deduced with logical necessity.

We have seen their first financial operations, and their unsatisfactory results. The first year of the Revolution closed with arrears in the income to the amount of 177 millions; and each of the last months of 1790 left a deficit of more than 30 millions. The *assignats*, fabricated in April, had already been spent before the end of August, and no new resources could be any where discovered. Mirabeau now played the same game, on a larger scale and with more hazardous audacity, as in the previous November. Necker's Ministry was at its last gasp, despised by almost every party, and bitterly hated by the Parisian mob since the affair of Nancy. Mirabeau hoped for a speedy change, and the appointment of his own friends; the Court seemed ready to accept his services, and Lafayette, too, showed himself more accommodating than ever. With a similar prospect in view, Mirabeau had suggested the creation of paper money in November, and now, again, he did not hesitate to resort to the last desperate expedient of a new issue of *assignats*. He wrote to the Queen, that no one could answer for the result, but that it was the only course possible. A declaration of national bankruptcy appeared to him more dangerous than even civil war, which he considered as virtually commenced. He thought that a domestic war would revive all the strongest and best qualities of mankind at the same time as the more terrible passions, while bankruptcy, which would cause a revolt of all the destitute, could do nothing but inflame the most brutal appetites and passions. There was, under the circumstances, a fearful truth in these remarks; but it was just as true that any one-sided financial measure, unaccompanied by the re-establishment of order, might, in-

deed, defer the bankruptcy, but only to make it doubly disastrous in the end. Mirabeau therefore was just as urgent for a change of Ministry, as for an issue of *assignats;* and Necker did in fact resign his post on the 10th September, unregretted by any party, but not without an energetic warning against the *assignats.* The partizans of the new issue had great difficulties to contend with in the Assembly, since the great Parisian capitalists seconded with all their influence the protest of the Right and the disinclination of Lafayette. Mirabeau nevertheless succeeded in carrying his motion by the end of the month. The Jacobins were on his side in this question; but that which outweighed all other considerations was the will of the Parisian population, who looked upon the new paper money as a fructifying shower from Heaven. The Assembly ordered that 800 millions of new *assignats* should be fabricated, and employed in the liquidation of the national debt—but that more than 1200 millions should never be put into circulation.

But if Mirabeau supposed that he had secured an Administration which he could look upon as his own, he was quickly undeceived. In the first place Lafayette completely deserted him, and in important legislative questions joined the Jacobins against Mirabeau. Then several tumults occurred in Paris, by which the Court was rendered once more entirely dependent on Lafayette. The Ministers tenaciously adhered to their posts, and when at last Mirabeau, without consulting the Court, dispersed them on the 21st of October by a crushing motion of entire want of confidence,[1] it was Lafayette who, after much hesitation, was empowered to name their successors. Things went on therefore in the same futile and procrastinating manner; and in a short time it was easy to see that the 800 millions would soon go the

[1] His letters to La Marck show that he was the author of the proposition. It is true that the National Assembly rejected the formal motion for the removal of the Ministry. but the debate had so great an effect that in fourteen days the Cabinet was broken up.

way of their predecessors. Every body felt this and was filled with anxiety. It was repeatedly declared from the rostra that a new financial period must commence with the first of January; and thus at last they arrived at the oft promised reform of the entire system of taxation.

As a basis for the new system, they endeavoured to ascertain the actual amount required by the State; which after long discussions was fixed at 580 millions for the Central Government, and 60 millions for the Departments; and besides this, 76 millions for extraordinary expenses for the year 1791;—*i. e.*, at a sum, about 100 millions less than the budget of the *ancien régime*, including the tithes. But unfortunately these figures were for the most part fallacious. They reckoned, *e. g.*, for the interest of the National debt and the pensions of the Clergy, only 302 millions, which was probably about 30 millions too little. They reckoned the cost of collecting the taxes at only 8 millions, whereas at the rate of only 6 per cent on the gross receipts, it would have amounted to 31 millions. The vote for the Church was reduced to 67 millions; for the Army from 99 to 89 millions; for the pensions from 29 to 12 millions;—sums, with which the State affairs could not be carried on at all, or only with open injustice and the most injurious consequences. But they wished, at any price, to avoid the confession that the burden of taxation had been increased by the Revolution; they did not choose to give such a triumph to the Right, and they did not think the people capable of calculating that the resources of the nation would be increased by the 4th of August 1789 in a still greater degree than its expenditure. They therefore went on building on the false foundation, and thereby at the same time perpetuated the previous disorder of the finances.

640 millions must be procured for the regular service of the State. Of this sum the national domains were to contribute 60 millions, the State forests 15 millions, the salt pools 5 millions, and an instalment of the American debt

4 millions. The observation was made that the national domains, under the wretched management of the Communal authorities, would yield at most only 40 millions; but this seemed a matter of little moment, since the item was only a transient one, and the sale of the domains would for the future strike off many millions from the burden of debt. They further reckoned as a part of the regular income—and that, too, without hesitation or opposition—32 millions, the value of half the stock of salt and tobacco which the State still had in its warehouses from a former period; although there was no intention of renewing that stock. In the same way, they set down 34 millions as a part of the patriotic income, tax of September, 1789, although this impost was likewise to end in the following year! By deducting these sums—in all about 148 millions—they were able to afford themselves the pleasure of announcing to the nation a reduction of taxes to less than 500 millions, and of leaving it to their successors to manage with this diminished income as they could.

The important question still remained in what manner the 500 or rather 492 millions should be distributed.

The old system was one in which the lower classes were drained for the advantage of their privileged rulers. The means employed were, a very complicated Administration, which gave room for the most arbitrary caprice in the collection of the taxes;—an unequal distribution of the direct taxes, which consisted mainly in a heavy poll-tax on the poor;—and lastly, a very heavy impost on the most simple and necessary articles of consumption.

The principles of the 4th of August required that all classes should be called on to contribute, according to a fair estimate, to the necessities of the State. All experience, however, has shown that this can only be done by a judicious union of direct and indirect taxation; for the estimate and collection of each can only be carried out with tolerable completeness in particular classes of the people, and particular departments of business. Directly therefore we seek to supply the ne-

cessities of the State from the one or the other exclusively, we necessarily deal unequally and unfairly with the different sources of the national income. Direct taxes are naturally best adapted to easily recognised capital, and therefore to landowners, officials and men of independent income. The poor man, on the contrary, cannot escape taxes on consumption, and these, therefore, are best suited to the populations of towns, in which surveillance may be most easily and safely exercised. In any political commotion, when a cry is raised for the reduction of taxes on consumption, we may be sure that the working classes of the towns—or the demagogues who make use of them—are at the head of it; just as, on the contrary, the rule of landowners is sure to lead to a system of indirect taxation. Thus England, in the last century, gradually reduced the land tax to a 36th part of the revenue of the State; but has subsequently seen herself compelled, by the daily increasing influence of her working classes, to give up a large portion of the taxes on consumption, and to substitute an income tax. It is therefore thoroughly consistent when the modern democratic systems—which look exclusively to the mass of city workmen—will hear of nothing else but an income tax, and entirely reject all indirect taxation. They are, indeed, entirely justified in their opposition to certain portions of existing systems of taxation, more especially to protective duties, which are an abuse of the principle of indirect taxation to the injury of the State and the enrichment of a few privileged persons. But the halo of philanthropy which has been thrown around them, is unreal and deceitful. It sounds well to say that the expenses of the State should be defrayed from the superfluities of the rich, and not from the necessaries of the poor; but as long as superfluity and necessity are relative notions, the State must be just before it can compel third persons to be charitable. It is consistent with justice, that the small artisan should pay as much as the peasant owner of land, and that both should be taxed according to their means; as the *millionnaire*

to his;—but not that both the rich man and the peasant should be ordered to provide and keep in order the whole State machinery for the workman of the city, who contributes nothing to its support. This can never become lawful, until the State denies entirely the right of private property, —assumes the management of every kind of possession— and then bestows upon its darlings as much as their hearts desire.

In the France of old times, indeed, neither town nor land was in any way favoured; the mode of collecting all the imposts was so tyrannical, that the indirect taxes weighed upon the peasant owners as much as the direct taxes on the artisans. Both were therefore abolished by the movement of 1789. But now that a new system was to be created, free from fiscal caprice, the natural interests of different classes were energetically put forward. The more influential the humbler classes throughout the kingdom had been made by the changes of 1790; and, above all, the greater the pressure the Parisians could bring to bear on the decrees of the National Assembly; the louder was the cry for the abolition of the indirect taxes. In this agitation the democratic turn which the Revolution was taking might be most clearly traced.

The most hateful of all the taxes was the *gabelle*, and it fell a sacrifice to the fury of the people in the summer of 1789. When the Assembly, in their pecuniary embarrassment, expressed the intention of removing this impost, but continued to levy it until some substitute had been found, the province of Anjou declared that it would hinder every attempt at collecting it with a force of 60,000 armed men. The people of Anjou received promises of support from all quarters; the Assembly therefore submitted to what was inevitable, and gave up without further resistance the 60 millions derived from the salt tax. This was soon followed by the abolition of three smaller duties on hair-powder, leather and iron—yielding together about 9 millions. As a substitute for

these, an extraordinary direct tax of 50 millions was imposed for 1790, but of which not a single farthing ever entered the Treasury. At that time, however, the coffers of the State were replenished for the moment by the first *assignats;* and the Government therefore proceeded in the same direction. The royalty on tobacco—yielding 27 millions,—and the wine and spirit duties—yielding 50 millions—were successively repealed. It was in vain that some of the more prudent deputies raised their warning voices; they were told that tobacco was, after all, smuggled into the country, and the duty on liquors left unpaid. The advocates of abolition triumphed and had, moreover, the satisfaction of giving the death-stroke to the detested company of the *Fermiers Généraux* and *Régisseurs.*

We are informed by writers that the Assembly was guided in these measures by the doctrines of the *Physiocrates,* according to which all taxes are, in the end, borne by the soil, and every duty and *octroi* is only an expensive and circuitous road to the object in view, and, at the same time, a useless bar to intercourse. In fact these propositions had been frequently and warmly discussed for thirty years. In the present day it is unnecessary to refute them, and all the more so, for *our* purpose, because the alleged influence of this doctrine upon the events of the Revolution was, in reality, very small. That which decided the National Assembly in their decrees was not the opinions of any school of political economists, but the political pressure exercised by the proletaries. The indirect taxes were retained in all cases where the sovereign people of the capital did not raise its mighty voice against them; *e.g.* the old duties for registering legal proceedings were not only left untouched, but raised from 40 to 51 in number; and a further stamp tax to the amount of 22 millions was added. We may easily understand that the men of the Palais Royal, and the Faubourg St. Antoine, had no direct interest in these imposts. Still more significant is the course which was taken by the

question of city *octrois*. These yielded, chiefly from meal and wine, 70 millions in the whole of France, of which 46 millions went to the State, and 24 to the towns and hospitals; and in Paris alone, 24 millions for the State and 13 millions for the city and hospitals. One would have supposed that the *physiocrates* and democrats, would have been especially zealous for the abolition of this impost, and it is with astonishment that we find it, at the end of 1790, still figuring unopposed in the budget for the following year. The reason of this was, that the proceeds of the *octroi* formed an indispensable portion of the income of the city, and as long as the Municipality did not propose its abolition, no one in the Assembly ventured to lay hands upon it. It was not until the Commune—no longer able to resist the desires of the lower classes in the troubled months of the Spring of 1791—itself demanded the removal of this impost, that it was unhesitatingly abolished; and even then the State was obliged to pay an indemnity of 3 millions to the city. To such an extent was the sovereignty of the people of Paris established over France, that the landowners had to sacrifice 46 millions to the National Exchequer and 3 millions more to the Parisian Municipality, in order that the artisan of Paris might pay 4 *sous* less for his bottle of wine.

Again, the lottery, which produced 10 millions, was, with the most glaring inconsistency, allowed to continue, because it was said the Treasury could not do without it. Of this barren and demoralising tax, too, Paris paid the greatest part; but Paris loved gaming as much as drinking, and therefore consistently demanded the maintenance of the lottery, and the abolition of the *octroi*.

This predominance of the capital had a more beneficial effect, in the then existing state of commerce, on the decision of the important question of duties. There was never any doubt of the propriety of doing away with the customs which separated the different Provinces, and a thorough remodelling of the scale of frontier duties seemed absolutely

necessary. In the National Assembly, the advocates of free-trade and the upholders of commercial protection, nearly balanced each other. This was clearly seen during the debate on the management of the East India trade, in which even Mirabeau could not completely carry out the more liberal principles against the protectors of the national industry. It was fortunate that Paris was not, at that time, so essentially a manufacturing place as it now is, and that its population, therefore, looked rather to the fiscal than the protectionist side of the system of duties. The people wished for low duties, and therefore the tariff was on the whole moderate. But they were still far from entirely abandoning the mercantile system; in general they adhered to the principles which Calonne had formerly expounded to the Notables, and contented themselves with expunging from the old tariff its numerous irregularities and its unfairness. There were some, but very few, prohibitive duties, and these founded for the most part on political and police considerations. The produce of these taxes to the Exchequer was reckoned as heretofore at a total of 22 millions.

Reckoning altogether, we find that the Ministry had given up 170 millions of the former taxes on consumption, and retained 110 millions of indirect taxes, such as registration duties, stamps, posts (12 millions), tolls, lottery and some smaller sources of revenue. As the domains, &c., were expected to yield 148 millions, there still remained 382 millions to be raised by direct taxes, to cover the regular expenditure of 640 millions. On this subject difficult and toilsome negociations took place, since it soon became evident that a crushing weight of taxation had been laid upon the landowners. Meanwhile the guilds had been abolished according to the decrees of the 4th of August, and freedom of labour proclaimed; but the traders and artisans of every class were now obliged to take out a patent every year, according to a moderate scale, from which an income of 22 millions was expected. In addition to this, there was a poll-

tax, or personal tax, which was partly struck out, but only in the case of salaries, wages, furniture or annual dividends. That it was not considerable, may be seen from the sum total, which was only 60 millions; and it is equally clear that the non-possessors suffered but little from it, since it is universally allowed that in many wealthy departments of the country, there was not a single farmer who was rated as high as 30 livres. There remained then a sum of 300 millions to be levied on the possessors of land—an amount of which it was immediately prophesied that it could not be raised, and whose disproportion to the other parts of the budget need not be pointed out. But in this case, the physiocratical theory, and the influence of the Parisian demagogues, worked together with irresistible force. It was proved to the possessors of land by arithmetic, that they would have paid more before 1789, and all further objections were cut short by a reference to the imperative necessities of the State. An order was given for the raising of the 300 millions, of which 60 were to be spent by the different departments themselves, and 240 handed over to the Exchequer. This amount was, in itself, sufficient to overburden the tax-payers; but besides this, the distribution and collection of it were arranged in a manner equally inconvenient tot he individual and the treasury. It was in vain that Cazalès urged that each piece of land should be valued once for all, and the tax fixed accordingly. Instead of this, it was arranged that a fifth of the net produce of every year should be paid, and that the ratings should be constantly regulated accordingly. The rating of each individual, therefore, was continually changing, and a wide field remained open to the exertions and the caprice of the controllers of taxes. These were the Directors of Departments and Districts, under whose superintendence the Municipal councils had to prepare, and annually revise, the rolls of tax-payers. But the former lacked connexion and authority, and the latter, time, calmness and knowledge of business; the work, therefore, had

scarcely been ordered and begun when it every where came to a stand-still. And thus the political parties soon took possession of the whole affair; the favourites of those in power got off scot-free, while their opponents might be ground to the dust without finding any means of redress. Here too, as in all such cases, disorder went hand in hand with caprice, anarchy with tyranny, and both with poverty. The direct taxes were rendered just as futile by these influences, as the indirect by the Parisian demagogues.

To recapitulate; the regular expenditure was reckoned at least 50 millions too low, and for the extraordinary expenses—which, by the way, were estimated at 76 millions,—not the slightest provision was made. Every thing was struck out of the revenue which did not suit the wishes of the Parisian proletaries, and one of the best-informed deputies prophecied a falling off of at least 100 millions in the proceeds of the direct taxes; in all, a deficit of more than 220 millions on a budget of 640 millions. This was to be the new order of things, by which the people with mutual congratulations and praises hoped to give firmness and solidity to the National finances, and, thereby, new life and vigour to the State.

But this was by no means all; for the National debt had grown in the same ratio as the deficit. With regard to the starting point of the whole Revolution—*viz.* the floating and over-due debts of the *ancien régime*—these were far from being liquidated, in spite of all the *assignats*. Of the over-due capitals as little was now said as in Necker's first budget; these amounted, in May 1789, to 52 millions; at the end of 1790 to 107 millions; in September 1791 and at the close of the first National Assembly to 120 millions. No one took any notice of them or of the debts of the different Ministries—amounting to 120 millions. The *anticipations*—which, as we have seen, had risen in May 1789, to 271 millions,—were discussed with noisy zeal, and their liquidation was ordered more than once; but on the 1st of February 1791, 50 millions of them still remained, and these had even

increased to 60 on the 1st of October. This was the state of the old debt, to which the Revolution had added another still greater. As, under the *ancien régime*, all offices and privileges had been at once hereditary and saleable, the price of every office that was abolished, had to be returned to the possessor; and the number of such offices was infinite. Their exact value has never been established, and the different estimates vary in an incredible manner. Necker states the price of the judicial offices at 350 millions; the next Minister of Finance, Ramel, at 492 millions; the National Assembly at 800 millions. Besides these there were the offices in the General administration—the caution money of the *Fermiers Généraux* and tax-collectors,—a few posts at Court and in the army—and the different guilds and trade privileges. The sum total of these new debts was reckoned at 1430 millions[1]—bearing an annual interest of about 72 millions. It would be unjust to make this increase of the public burdens—as the Royalists at that period did with malicious joy—a ground of accusation against the Revolution. The whole weight of reproach falls entirely on the old Government, which had raised money at the cost of its subjects by the sale of offices, and thereby eaten away, to a vast extent, the germs of future prosperity. The Revolution might, perhaps, have spared a third of that sum by greater, moderation and deliberation in its reforms. But, in the majority of cases, an energetic and radical mode of proceding, was both a necessity and a gain; and the only charge which can be fairly brought against the National Assembly—a damning one, certainly—is that such an overburdening of the finances did not give them a stronger impulse towards eco-

[1] Montesquiou's Report of Sept. 9. 91. He there enumerates them together with the old arrears of the Ministries—the rest of the *anticipations*—and the capital fallen due; if we take them out of this long list we get the above-mentioned sum. Ramel, *Des Finances en l'an IX.*, p. 49, reckons—including the arrears of the Ministries (139 millions)—1304 millions *sommes exigibles*, and 12 millions *sommes en rentes*.

nomy, moderation and order. It was, properly, for the liquidation of these very debts that the *assignats* were designed; and yet the continuance of anarchy constantly rendered it necessary to defray the current expenses with this paper money. The issue of September was exhausted in June 1791, and thus a total of 1200 millions had been consumed. Of this sum only 108 millions [1] had been employed in the liquidation of the debt—416 [2] in the payment of *anticipations* and arrears of interest—and 476 millions in the current expenses of Government. [3]

Such a result was calculated to excite the greatest consternation. On the supposition that it would redeem the issue of paper money by the sale of the national domains, the State had given away nearly 700 millions,—*i. e.* a yearly income of about 30 millions,—without obtaining the smallest lasting advantage for itself. Whether the sale of public lands would increase the prosperity of individuals, and thereby indirectly the wealth of the whole State, was at that time more than doubtful; at the present day we have clearly ascertained that the advantages and disadvantages of the sale completely balanced one another, and that the true progress of French agriculture was not owing to it, but solely to the night of the 4th of August. But another subject of contemplation presses itself upon our notice. The disorder of the finances, the emptiness of the Exchequer, the democratic and socialistic claims on the public purse, continued; and

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[1] Montesquiou's Report, Sec. 5, *remboursements*. From which it appears, that the Bureau of Assignats had paid—up to January 1st 1791—47 millions of terminable loans fallen due, besides the 221 millions of *anticipations*, and 28 millions of arrears of ground rents. Up to the end of June 61 millions more were paid—in all 108 millions. — [2] *I. e.* 221 millions of *anticipations* (Montesquiou's report of Sept. 9), 80 millions arrears of *Rentes* up to Jan. 1. 1791—and 140 millions in Feb. 1791.—60 millions of *anticipations*, were left unpaid. [3] And notwithstanding all this, there were 20 millions *arriérés des départements* in the year 1790; and 110 millions advances from the *Fermiers et Régisseurs Généraux*.

the Government had only the choice of immediately declaring itself bankrupt, or concealing the real state of things by a new issue of paper money. They unhesitatingly chose the latter. The decree of the 27th of September prescribed that more than 1200 millions should never be brought into circulation; but as about 160 millions had been redeemed by the sale of public lands, it was considered allowable immediately to issue 100 millions. This was to be done in the form of five-franc notes, with a view of facilitating small traffic, as complaints of the rarity of specie were raised in every quarter. Trade with foreign countries absorbed several millions annually; large sums were melted down and disappeared—by which process a net profit of ten per cent. could be made. The chief point however was the uncertainty of the law; for a great number of people took their specie with them into foreign countries or deposited it in foreign banks; while others hoarded it, and tried to live on their gradually deteriorating paper money. In April and September, the State had only issued *assignats* for large amounts, and fixed the lowest value at 50 *livres;* but in the Spring of 1791 smaller notes were to be seen—first in Lyons and Bordeaux, soon afterwards in Paris and elsewhere—with which manufacturers and masters paid their workmen, and rich gentlemen their artisans. But the idea that the State was to be answerable for all affairs of national economy had gained such ground, that the Government resolved, on its own part, to make an issue of five-franc notes. If their value had been fixed, little objection could have been made to this measure; but as all *assignats* were from 4 to 6 per cent lower in value than silver, the poorer classes, as possessors of the small notes, were made to feel all the variations of the exchange and the national credit. The moral effect of this was almost more dangerous than the material; the workmen became stock-jobbers. "The peasant," said Burke, in his energetic manner, "does not know whether the money which he has received at market for his corn has

still retained its value in the nearest shop; no one in Paris settles in the morning what he will have for dinner without making a speculation."

But the National Assembly did not go on long with their 100 millions, especially since these were not ready for several months; they therefore determined on the 19th of June to issue 600 millions above the limit of 1200. They calculated that the mortgage of the national domains would easily bear this new burden; though they soon found that the value of the *assignats* immediately sank from 8 to 10 per cent discount. All the evils of this depreciation naturally increased in the same ratio; and we shall consider this point somewhat more closely in connexion with particular branches of trade. The worst of the matter was, that every one foresaw the speedy consumption of these 600 millions, and a succession of new issues of paper money. It needed no great acuteness even at that time to prophecy the final result.

The greater the quantity of *assignats*, the greater their depreciation. The only means of keeping up their value was to increase the security on which they rested—in other words to proceed with the confiscation of estates. The property of the Church was almost exhausted, and the democrats had already often spoken of sequestrating the estates of the *Emigrés*.

The more *assignats*, the greater the influence of the Government over all private property. He who can at any moment create millions without cost or labour, can buy up all the world, and give away what he has bought at his pleasure. A cautious possessor of property, indeed, might mistrust the value of those millions; and an obstinate proprietor might choose to keep his estate though the treasures of the earth were offered in exchange. In such a case the Government must be strong and bold enough to denounce distrust and obstinacy as crimes against the country; and then the State becomes master of all the property in the land, and the community of goods is attained.

Such was the direction which the internal affairs of France were beginning to take under the first National Assembly. These years have very often been called the good times of the Revolution; but in truth they differ from the year 1793, exactly in the same way as the seed from the crop. We have made ourselves acquainted with the first germs of the future growth, we must now consider the soil in which they were planted.

No one, it appears, gathered such immediate and golden fruits from the Revolution, as the most numerous and oppressed class in France, the peasant-owners. One short, warm night in August brought them freedom from feudal tribunals, feudal services, church tithes, inland duties, and the trammels of guilds in the towns. But when the joyful news ran through the country, the people—poor and rude as their late masters had made them—were already in a state of terrible excitement, which threatened to destroy their new advantages by inducing new errors. When they drove away or killed their feudal lords, capital, which had never been very plentifully employed in agriculture, entirely disappeared from the rural districts. Again, when the tithes were abolished, the peasants, instead of employing the money thus saved in the improvement of their cattle—which was their weakest point—remembered that they had turned much arable land into pasture, because the pasture had hitherto paid smaller tithes, and now, under the altered circumstances, they began to change their pasture land into corn fields again, in order to derive immediate profit from the high price of wheat. Then the tax on all kinds of liquors was abolished; a change which was received with great applause—for the French peasant has always had the greatest delight in the cultivation of vines. Now that the tax was removed from this favourite occupation, thousands and thousands of Communes,—without regard to the quality of their soil—were covered with vines, and innumerable small fortunes invested in this precarious occupation.

For a time every thing seemed to prosper, but it was the prosperity of the spendthrift who lives on his capital. That which delighted them even more than the abolition of tithes and feudal rights was the cessation of state taxes, which the weakness of the new Government enabled every man to evade at his pleasure. In this first period of the Revolution, 170 millions a year, which had formerly been collected by the Intendants, remained in the pockets of the peasants; no wonder therefore, that the villages were proudly conscious of their prosperity, and that the men themselves—in spite of all the quarrels and disorders of the times—began to hold their heads higher in the world.

But the dangers immediately showed themselves, side by side with the gains. It was, after all, only that portion of the rural population which possessed property, which derived advantage from the fall of the territorial aristocracy and the feudal rights. He who had no land could feel but little pleasure at the emancipation of the soil. He who dragged on a wretched existence as the tenant of an acre, or half an acre, of land, felt little interest in the cessation of compulsory labour, since he possessed no capital to enable him to turn his leisure time to advantage. The high prices of corn, too, which brought such rich profits to the wealthy tenant farmers of the North, were only a burden to the majority of the small peasant-owners. They produced no more corn—nay, less—than they used; it was their interest, therefore, as well as that of the rural day-labourers and the city operatives, that wages should be high and bread cheap. They were all in so far contented with the late changes as they had freed them from the *taille*, and the poll-tax; but in other respects they thought that the Revolution had only just commenced its course, and to speak of it as already terminated seemed to them mere treachery. It was no advantage to them that the neighbouring farmer had turned his pastures into cornfields, or planted his arable land with vines, and that, for the moment, he prospered so

well as to drink wine instead of cider, and to eat meat instead of blackbread. It would have been to their advantage, if the new government had endeavoured to substitute money rentals for the *métairies*—to give an impulse to agricultural operations on a grand scale, and thereby open the way to profitable employment. But the impatience of democracy led to the very opposite results. The people abhorred large estates, because they had good reason to think ill of their former landlords. They regarded it as one of the first conditions of freedom, to increase the number of small proprietors, and resolved immediately to turn the poorer peasants into landowners, by dividing the estates of the Church into minute plots.

From the extreme poverty of the great majority of peasants, it could hardly have had any effect if the estates of the Church had been divided into as many lots as there were families, and a quota presented to each. Every one of these poor people would have received, perhaps, a piece of land which had hitherto yielded 100 *livres* a year;[1] but he himself would not have gained nearly so much from it, and would, moreover, have lost his rich neighbour who had thrown many opportunities of earning something extra in his way. What advantage would accrue, if the lands were sold instead of being given away? However low the price had been fixed, the most numerous class, who possessed nothing at all, would have been unable to pay it; in their ears, therefore, the high-sounding words, "Sale of the estates of the Church," had no meaning at all. The inevitable result quickly followed; no sooner were the riots against the Feudal Lords at an end, no sooner had the middle class of peasant-owners established themselves in their new acquisitions, than the second—the social Revolution—succeeded to the first, which was political.

[1] Net revenue of the Church land 70 millions; gross revenue, according to the estimate at that period, about 170; 7 millions of rural proletaries, or 1½ million families.

Bread had been dear since the bad harvest of 1788. Necker's mistakes had prolonged the dearth of food, for he purchased many millions' worth of corn, made the deficiency known throughout the whole country, and thereby excited so much alarm that the prices every where rose, and the possessors of corn kept back their supplies. Then the storm of the Revolution broke loose; and every one seized upon what lay nearest to him. Most of the provinces and towns would not allow their corn to be exported; all traffic ceased and the dearth continually increased. The people were furious, for it was known that supplies existed and yet every body was starving. Sometimes it was said that the Aristocracy, and sometimes that the usurers kept their corn concealed, from ill-will or avarice; and before long, every corn-dealer was looked upon as a blood-sucker and went in danger of his life; which of course only increased the evil. We shall see, by-and-by, how they managed to make shift in the towns; but in the open country the people were immediately reduced to extremities. The peasants demanded that the State should control the usurers, and fix the price of corn. They banded themselves together in many hundred places, and the authorities were not always able to resist their demands. Sometimes, therefore, the town made good the damage done to the proprietors by a grant from the Commune, but very often the individual was left to bear his loss alone. Matters were at the worst in the summer of 1790 in those Departments, which also made the commencement of the political movement in 1789, and in the Jacquerie of 1851—in the old provinces Bourbonnais, Berry, Nivernais, Charolais, probably the poorest districts in the whole country, in which the system of *métairies* then, as now, existed with all its miserable consequences. Whilst Nismes and Montauban were roused to rebellion by the Ecclesiastical troubles—whilst patriotic risings were taking place in the border towns—the peasants ran to arms in the centre of the kingdom to lower the price of corn by force. But they

did not long remain satisfied with their first demand; after having steeled their courage by the conquest of the town of Decize, they arbitrarily altered the rent and the duration of the farming leases, and openly demanded a number of properties which had come into the hands of their possessors more than a hundred years before. The land resounded with the dreaded cry for an agrarian law, and Communism showed itself in undisguised brutality. It is true that the National Assembly would not hear of this, nor were the proletaries strong enough to break down the opposition of the middle classes by so direct an assault. Decrees were passed and arms were seized, and every where the National guards of the towns marched out to defend the convoys of corn from the peasants; and for several months the National Assembly received successive reports of these miserable expeditions. By the winter the revolt of the peasants had been put down, but no complete security had been obtained. Of what advantage was it that the National Assembly interdicted the cry for a division of land, whilst they made equally dangerous concessions to the proletaries, and were furthering the masked Communism of the State by means of the *assignats?* It was on this ground that Robespierre, before all others, took up his position. He was inexhaustible in the high-sounding phrases with which he endeavoured to palliate the licentiousness of the people, to pourtray their sufferings, and to urge upon the Assembly *a gentle culture of prosperity;* when in fact prosperity could only be promoted by a rigorous suppression of disorders. He was very careful not directly to offend the prejudices in favour of property; in this case, as well as on the question of Republicanism, he exercised the utmost prudence, and was satisfied if he could remove the more immediate hindrance to the prosecution of his aims. By conviction and theory he was as little of a Communist as a Republican; but a true instinct taught him that by the course he was pursuing, he would most securely attach to himself the

enthusiasm of the boldest classes, and gain a position from which he could look with contempt on the random efforts of the other demagogues. The only man who outbid him in his own way was Marat, whose imaginative and ardent nature was unable to understand such cold prudence; and who thought himself man enough at the head of his proletaries to seize the reins of power by a *coup de main;* and therefore, incessantly urged the Government to hang the usurers, to trample on the oppressors, and to give the money to the virtuous People.

In the meantime the important measures of the sale of the national domains, and the issue of the *assignats,* began to take effect in the country districts. As we may easily suppose, many months passed before the movement, commenced in Paris, reached the rural districts. During the year 1790 the retail sale of land went on slowly, and it was not until November that the legal conditions were settled. The Municipalities, who managed the sale, had to value the estates before the auction, and received a sixteenth part of the proceeds—originally a quarter of the surplus above the valuation—for themselves. In other respects every thing was done to entice purchasers; the form of proceeding was very simple, the instalments were moderate, long terms were granted for the payment of the residue, and various State securities were received as purchase money, as well as silver and *assignats.* By all these means the Government succeeded in forcing a more and more rapid sale of lands. 964 million *livres* were raised in this way by the close of the Constituent Assembly, and great satisfaction was expressed at the number and patriotism of the new proprietors; every one rejoiced in the improved prospects of the Treasury and the general pacification of the peasants.

But even here the result was not destined to yield unalloyed satisfaction. As the Municipalities had a direct interest in obtaining high prices, and as the National Assembly from political reasons greeted every large sum with

clapping of hands, every bidder was made welcome without the smallest inquiry into his character or solvency. In many departments a wild speculation prevailed in the market; penniless men bought at fabulous prices—often at double the valuation—and then handed over the lands to speculators whose tools they were, and who advanced the first instalment. Then as much as possible was got out of the estate in the shortest time, the timber was cut down, the fields exhausted, the buildings pulled down and sold for materials; and when the State prosecuted the purchaser for default of payment, the property was found to be greatly depreciated. The confusion reached its greatest height in the Spring of 1791, when the value of the *assignats* began to vary, and the traffic in lands, and gambling at the *Bourse*, went on at the same time. How soon had the hope vanished, that from the very commencement of the sale of lands—by which the *assignats* were to be realized—the value of paper currency would rise? The whole body of purchasers, who had made bids to the amount of 900 millions, and were now for a series of years to pay their debt by instalments, had a direct interest in depressing the current value of the *assignats*, that they might obtain the means of payment for as little money as possible. As the State lived entirely on *assignats*, a fall in their value of one per cent was a loss of millions, and swallowed up the profit of many sales. But the political and moral mischief was still greater than the financial; the canker of stock-jobbing, which, more than any thing else, had ruined the morals of Paris, was now extended to the rural districts. What a prospect for a country, when its rural population was changed into a great band of gamblers!

This process was accelerated by the minute division of land, which the Government continued strongly to recommend. The law directed that the sale should always be made in small lots, unless, indeed, a higher bid could be obtained by selling in a more wholesale manner. As a rule there was to be a certain limit to this subdivision, and the

farms and *Métairies* of which the estate had hitherto consisted, were not to be further broken up. But the zeal of the Municipalities overlooked these regulations, whenever there was a prospect of a higher offer, and at last sold the land in as minute fragments as any purchaser desired. The demand was, of course, greatly stimulated by this means, and the smaller peasant proprietors, to whom the market was now opened, came forward with great zeal. Whoever among them possessed a little money purchased a piece of land—generally so much that his little fund was exhausted by the first instalment, and no capital remained with which to cultivate his new acquisition. The greater part of the estates, moreover, had been terribly neglected and exhausted during the municipal management, under which they had been for the last year; there was, therefore, little doubt that the majority of these fortunate purchasers would go in the very next year to reinforce the army of starving people, who, ten months before, had demanded of the State an agrarian law and a fixed price of corn.

Thus every thing in the country seemed to threaten new convulsions of pauperism. If we turn to the cities, our first attention is claimed by the capital, at that time the focus of all events.

The provisional administration of the "Three hundred," which came to our notice on the 5th of October, had remained in office until the summer of 1790, ere the permanent constitution for the city had been completed. The National Assembly, usually accustomed to organize for others without much hesitation, wished to make the Parisians manage their own affairs, and waited for the proposals of the "Three hundred." The latter, therefore, drew up a scheme, which, in the main, retained the forms of the previous constitution. There was to be a larger and smaller Council for legislative purposes, and a Mayor with his subordinates as Executive; and the city Commune was to be divided into 48 sections, and to act as an electoral body. But the zealous adherents

of the "Rights of man" emphatically raised their voice against these institutions. They knew that every human being was a part of the sovereign people, and they held the sovereign citizens far too high to allow them to be satisfied with the mere choice of their rulers. They demanded, therefore, that the District Assemblies should sit *en permanence;* that the Mayor should every day take their votes on current questions, and act according to the aggregate of their decrees. The practical working of this system might be foreseen with certainty. The man who had any other sphere of activity would soon absent himself from these eternal sections, and leave the field either to idle *rentiers,* or the vagabonds of the Palais Royal, who at that time saw a clear opening before them. Among the leaders of the latter Danton with the Districts of the Cordeliers took up this question most zealously; while Brissot—at that time a member of the Municipal council—was the champion of the representative system. This was the first occasion on which the latter embroiled himself with his democratic comrades, and the breach was never entirely healed. Finally, after innumerable debates, placards and quarrels, the National Assembly carried their point, and acceded to the views of the "Three hundred" in spite of Robespierre's opposition.

The administration of the city therefore remained almost unchanged; Bailly was chosen Mayor again, and Lafayette retained the chief command of the National Guards. The attacks of the democrats on both of them increased if possible in violence. Lafayette's popularity, especially, had greatly sunk, since the King, at the beginning of 1791, by the advice of Mirabeau and Montmorin, had stopped the grants from the civil list, which the General had hitherto extorted for his secret Police by the bugbear of threatening revolts. The state of the finances occupied more and more attention in the policy both of the city and of the empire, and the democratic press agitated the social question with increasing energy. Marat, as we have seen, demanded with-

out any circumlocution, that the money should be taken from the rich and given to the poor; and the Abbot—afterwards Bishop—Fauchet came forward as *doctrinaire* preacher, and founded a "social circle," in which, with the mingled parade of a freemason and an ecclesiastic, he discussed the division of property and the political emancipation of women. The Jacobins at this period entered into no such investigations, but they co-operated most energetically for the same object by their practice, since their leaders had need of the mob for new undertakings, and were obliged to keep up their good will by solid benefits. The National Assembly therefore consented to what they could not prevent; they applauded when an orator, in what was now the stereotyped style, lauded the infallibility of the people, and the virtue which was only to be found among the needy classes. They felt all the enthusiasm of philanthropic conviction, when their Committee on the state of the poor declared that the extirpation of pauperism was a National duty; and although, in the midst of their pecuniary, embarrassment they were terrified at the proposal of a yearly outlay of 51 millions, yet the galleries had noted the expression, "National duty," and considered it quite natural that the obligation of the nation should give every individual proletary an undeniable claim to support.

Thus the opinion took root in Paris far and wide, that the nature of freedom consisted in casting every care upon society, and demanding aid from the State in every trouble. There was no doubt that want and suffering existed to a very great extent, but it was just as clear that the machinations of the democrats were continually increasing the sufferings of the people. Paris had formerly obtained its principal livelihood from the rich landowners, and the great speculators, who spent in that city probably a third of all the revenues of France during a large portion of the year. Of these a considerable number had fled from the country; the remaining landowners had suffered enormous losses, and

from the insecurity of their future were inclined to be very sparing of what remained to them. As to the speculations of the Bourse, it was against these and all that belonged to them that the fury of the people was especially directed. No quarter of a year ever passed, in which the National Guard were not called upon to protect the houses of the money changers and bankers, or without a proposal being made in the Palais Royal, amidst thunders of applause, to hang up the usurers and bloodsuckers. This was not the way to encourage them to indulge in expense and luxury; and yet there were no other means by which the trades could obtain work and bread.

Whilst the opportunities of earning money were thus diminished, the willingness to work fell off in an equal degree. While the workmen were day after day kept in activity and pay by the demagogues, while they were continually hearing that they were the real sovereigns, and the State and the Commune their immediate debtors, they had neither time nor inclination for the severe exertions of their trade. It is true that revolutionary work and pay were not always to be had, but, at the worst, they had a refuge in the public workshops, where good wages were to be got without trouble. These institutions had grown to an enormous extent. In spite of every effort, the number of workmen could not be reduced below 12,000. Every vacancy was immediately filled up from the provinces, since the State paid 20 sous—the highest day wages to be had in France at that time—for useless earthworks. In order, at any rate, to lessen the accumulation of workmen in Paris, 2½ millions were expended on the 30th of May 1790 in the foundation of new workshops in the Departments, to which the non-Parisians were sent. But the establishment in Paris immediately filled again; idleness increased, and a decree of the 31st of August for the introduction of piece-work instead of daily wages remained without any effect. The crowd of workmen increased as discipline declined, and it was remarked

that a quarter of the people, at most, came to their work, while the number of those who received wages amounted in October to 19,000. The Municipality was too weak to make any alteration, and the workmen always had the same answer, that the State was bound to provide for them.

Similar proceedings occurred in the Departments. In addition to those $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions granted by the State, the towns spent untold sums from their own resources, in order to keep their workmen quiet in the public workshops. The amounts thus expended were not always stated, nor even the names of the towns; we shall here cite a few examples out of the great mass. Toulouse, as early as March, announced that it had 11,000, Amiens in May, 15,000, the Seine-Oise Department, in November, 41,000 workmen, who were being supported at the cost of these towns by so-called charitable works. It was just the same in Besançon and Lyons, in Valenciennes and Langres. At first they raised loans, and when their credit was exhausted they levied an extraordinary income tax. As these labours were entirely unproductive, Marat's theory was soon fully realized; those who had no property received—those who had, paid,—on pain of a new Revolution. It was but a vanishing drop in this ocean of necessities, when the Assembly, on the 16th of December, set apart 15 millions for alleged works, and immediately distributed $6\frac{2}{3}$ millions of it. The number of people employed in the Parisian workshops rose, in the spring of 1791, to 31,000, and the daily expenses to 60,000 livres; so that Paris alone would have absorbed more than those 15 millions in a single year. Most of these workmen were non-Parisians, and besides these an equal number of necessitous strangers, to whom even the workshops seemed too laborious, were wandering about in the mighty city.

The second great question, equally important in a political, and still more so in a financial point of view—a question which had occupied the administration of Paris since the beginning of the Revolution—was the mode of supplying the

city with provisions. At the end of 1790 it appeared that the State had bought corn to the amount of 75 millions,—had born the cost of transporting and grinding it—and, lastly, had granted 5½ millions to private dealers as premiums on the importation of corn. The Provinces profited by the last item, but nearly the whole of the first fell to the lot of the capital.[1] The State paid for their corn at the rate of 40 to 50 francs a *septier*, and consequently received a supply sufficient for the consumption of the city during 18 months.[2] The Municipal Council then sold the flour to the bakers at half price; so that bread in Paris was only half as dear as in most of the Departments. This alone was a present of more than 30 millions, which the country made to preserve peace and order in its capital. But this was not enough. The city ought of course to have repaid to the exchequer what it received from the retail sale of the corn. But, as we have seen was the case in October 1789, the repayment at a later period, was omitted; and the State at last received back only 2 millions instead of 30 millions. This was about the cost of grinding and transporting,[3] so that, in fact, these supplies had been altogether gratuitously presented to the city of Paris.

We must further reckon that the State paid the National Guard of Paris 8 millions for pay and equipment by the end of the year 1790; that it likewise bore the expenses of lighting and paving the streets, to the amount of 2 millions; and that it allowed the expenses of destroying the Bastille to be put down at more than a million, though it had not cost a tenth part of that sum.[4] We must, moreover, remember that the State spent, as we have seen, more than

[1] Bailly's *Memoires, passim.*—Correspondence between Bailly and Necker; Buchez, IV.—Debates of the National Convention, Oct. 19. 1793.—[2] 1⅔ Million Septiers for 75 millions francs. Paris consumed on the average 3000 Septiers a-day; and consequently lived on the above-mentioned supplies about 555 days or 18 months.—[3] Account of the Minister of France in Montesquiou's report of Sept. 9. 1791.—[4] Debates of the Commune of Paris, Jan. 15. 1795.

17 millions in giving employment to the workmen of Paris; and lastly that it gave the town the reversion of about 16 millions from the sale of the Church lands. This gives us a total of more than 90 millions, which the kingdom had to raise within 20 months, for a city of about 600,000 inhabitants; not to mention the current budget of the city, or the regular expenses of administration, from which Paris derived more advantage than any other part of the Empire.

The other towns, of course, did not receive an equal degree of aid from the Treasury, but the state of things was every where the same, and the towns were obliged, at their own expense, to furnish the bakers with flour at half price, as well as to give money to the proletaries for half a day's work, that they might purchase bread. To give even an approximation to the total of these expenses for the whole country is simply impossible. In one year (1790), the advances made by the State to the Municipalities of the Departments, for the purchase of corn, amounted to 1600 millions.[1] But whether the means of payment were furnished by the State or a Municipality, the result was always the same, that those who possessed had to pay and pay again to support the needy, whether the latter worked or not. Nor was this any longer regarded as voluntary aid at a time of unavoidable and extraordinary disaster; the source of the people's suffering was no longer to be found in nature itself; on the contrary, the harvests of 1789 and 1790 were abundant, and wherever any extreme want existed at the end of the latter year, its course may be traced to the disturbance of public order and the insecurity of property. Every proceeding therefore, which, like those above referred to, was calculated to put a constraint upon the proprietors, might indeed satisfy the hungry for the moment, but indirectly increased their misery a hundred-fold.

In the year 1791 all these evils continued in full force.

[1] Johannot's *Report to the Convention*, July 12. 1795.

It is true that at first the *assignats* gave the same impulse to business in the city as in the country, but the apparent improvement had no firm foundation even in the towns. Wherever a great quantity of paper money is suddenly issued, we invariably see a rapid increase of trade. The great quantity of the circulating medium sets in motion all the energies of commerce and manufactures; capital for investment is more easily found than usual, and trade perpetually receives fresh nutriment. If this paper represents real credit, founded upon order and legal security, from which it can derive a firm and lasting value, such a moment may be the starting point of a great and widely extended prosperity; as for instance, the most splendid improvements in English agriculture were undoubtedly owing to the emancipation of the country banks. If, on the contrary, the new paper is of precarious value, as was clearly seen to be the case with the French *assignats* as early as February 1791, it can have no lastingly beneficial fruits. For the moment, perhaps, business receives an impulse all the more violent, because every one endeavours to invest his doubtful paper in buildings, machines and goods—which under all circumstances retain some intrinsic value. Such a movement was witnessed in France in 1791, and from every quarter there came satisfactory reports of the activity of manufactures. The commercial excitement, and, in an equal degree, the commercial danger, were enhanced by one particular circumstance. The exchange with foreign countries had been for some years unfavourable to France. Since the year 1783 the country imported more than it exported; then came Necker's wholesale purchases of corn, and lastly the utter derangement of commercial relations by the Revolution, which every where prostrated the home production, and rendered it necessary to give orders in foreign countries. France had, therefore, to make more payments than it received, and consequently to bear the expenses of those payments, and to lose in the exchange. The loss in the Spring of 1791 was from 9 to

11 per cent. Here too the *assignats* exercised an influence; for as, at this period, they stood at 4 to 6 per cent discount, and the foreign merchant had to be paid in silver, the total loss to the French in the exchange was 15 per cent. The Frenchman, *e. g.*, who owed 30 pounds sterling in London, had to give a bill, not for the nominal value, 740 *livres*, but for 880 *livres*; while on the contrary the Englishman, who wished to pay a debt in Paris of 880 *livres*, could do so with 30 pounds sterling instead of 34. But for the moment the French manufactures derived great advantage from this state of things. As their products could be so cheaply paid for, orders poured in from foreign countries to such a degree, that it was often difficult for the manufacturers to satisfy their customers. But it is easy to see that prosperity of this kind must very soon find its limit. It was not founded upon any actual and permanent want of those who gave the order, and could only last until the increased exports from France had restored the balance of the exchange. This factitious prosperity therefore was not calculated to lead to lasting investments of capital and costly extensions of business; and when a further fall in the *assignats* took place it would necessarily collapse at once, and be succeeded by a crisis all the more destructive, the more deeply men had engaged in speculation under the influence of the first favourable prospects.

The new emancipation of trade had contributed to the activity of business at that time. After its proclamation during the night of the 4th of August, it was immediately carried into operation; and though it produced, of course, some confusion and loss, yet, like the emancipation of the soil, it had, from the very commencement, a highly invigorating effect. But it was not until March 1791 that it was formally sanctioned by a law, according to which every Frenchman was allowed to carry on whatever trade he pleased, on the sole condition of paying a licence tax to the State. Every bond therefore was burst, and every kind of

organization of trade would have laid new fetters on individuals; while the sole object of the National Assembly was to leave to every man the sole use of his own powers. We have heard a great deal in our own day, both from the feudal and the Socialist parties, against this system of isolation—*atomism*, and *egoism*. All that has been said on this subject since the Revolution was comprehended in the reproach which Marat made against the National Assembly; when he said, that by granting free competition, they had given the signal for industrial anarchy, knavery and pauperism. We have now however had sufficient experience to enable us to pronounce, that entire freedom of labour has been nowhere more decidedly successful than in France; and that in no department has it produced more beneficial results than in that of French manufactures. The effects are so palpable, as to render all further discussion unnecessary.

Though the National Assembly was right in refusing to meddle with the internal mechanism of trade, yet they might have earned the thanks of the nation by cleansing and levelling the ground for its operations. A judicious legislature does not act inconsistently with the principles of industrial freedom, by rousing its energies, and facilitating its operations by clearing away hindrances. There can be no reasonable objection to industrial schools, statistical accounts of the condition of manufactures, and associations for mutual assistance. To have paid but little attention to these subjects is a reproach, which attaches not only to the first National Assembly, but to the Revolution throughout its whole course.

If however we enquire into the main reason of this neglect, we shall be obliged to transfer the responsibility to other shoulders.

Even before the law which established industrial freedom existed, several associations of workmen were formed for the improvement of their condition.[1] The first of these arose

[1] Du Cellier, *Hist. des classes laborieuses*, Paris, 1859, p. 460, observes,

among the carpenters, under the title "Association of duties"—*viz.* the duties, of the workmen; among the most important of which was that of striking work to force the masters to pay higher wages! Then followed the printers; negociations were carried on with the masters, and the Town Council was prevailed upon to express a kind of semi-approbation. Meanwhile the number of members and unions increased; they entered into connexion with one another, established affiliated societies in the departments, and entered into regular correspondence with them. It is certainly no mark of political soundness, when a State cannot bear such things as these; and it is no true carrying out of industrial freedom to forbid to the workmen what is allowed to the masters. But it is equally mischievous, when the associations of workmen go too far in a contrary direction, and understand by the word freedom, the right of injuring others. And this is what immediately took place in Paris, as it had done a year before among the peasants. The unions began to compel workmen to strike even when individuals were satisfied with their wages, and to threaten strange workmen, whom the masters had brought from a distance to supply vacancies. In other words, they compelled the masters to pay higher wages by threats of open violence. The proceeding was exactly the same as that of the Commune, which demanded from the State, money to procure bread—abolition of the *octroi*—and compensation to the city at the cost of the State—under the threat of a new Revolution. It was the same thing in principle as when the peasants called for a new division of the land.

The Municipal Council had not the means, or perhaps not the courage, to resist the unions; so that the matter came before the National Assembly at the end of May. It was at this time that the number of workmen in the public

that association for keeping up the rate of wages at a point sufficient to afford a livelihood, had existed from time immemorial among the apprentices of the various Guilds.

workshops had risen to 31,000, and threatened constantly to increase. The *octroi* had lately been abolished, and the distribution of corn continued; but instead of the expected amelioration, communistic violence began to intrude into all the relations of private life. Weak and indulgent as the parliamentary chiefs had shewn themselves in opposing anarchy, the fear of impending ruin now lent them courage for an energetic resolution. Political circumstances, to which we shall refer again, contributed to hasten the catastrophe.

On the 14th of June, the Assembly passed a law which forbade all associations of workmen of the same trade,—the drawing up of lists of members—the collection of union funds—and the establishment of union authorities—as a revival of the abolished guilds. At the same time they were inconsiderate enough to comfort the destitute workmen by the fatal declaration, that the nation would have to procure work for the unemployed, and support for the sick.[1] Two days afterwards another decree was issued which ordered the dissolution of the public workshops on the 1st of July following, and the removal of the strange workmen to their homes; and at the same time, made a grant of a million to the city of Paris, and a million and a half to the Departments, for the relief of the distress, which these measures might in the first instance cause. This was striking at the root of the evil; for, on the one hand, the dissolution of the unions saved the property of the masters, and the removal of the strangers secured the prosperity of the city, and, we may even say, the possibility of any government whatever. The strangers formed the audience of the Palais Royal; it was they who had taken the lead in the storming of the Bastille and the riots of the 6th of October; they were in fact the body-guard of the Revolution. The excitement

[1] We must here observe that the law applied the same prohibition to Masters and employers as to workmen, and in this respect contrasts favourably with the subsequent decrees of 1803 (Germinal XI.) and 1804 (Floréal XII.) *Conf.* Du Cellier, 342.

therefore caused by these two decrees was very considerable. All who had hitherto existed at the expense of the State—all who had thrust their hands into the pockets of the masters and the land-owners—all to whom the continuance of the Revolution promised a livelihood, saw themselves threatened in their material interests, by the reaction of the National Assembly.

And just at this very time a political crisis occurred which suddenly opened to them the prospect of ending all their troubles at a blow, and of subjecting France to the dominion of the poorest classes by one rapid and violent outbreak.

CHAPTER V.

COMPLETION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

LOUIS XVI. AFTER THE ATTACK ON THE CHURCH.—CIVIL OATH OF THE PRIESTS.—THE KING'S PLANS OF FLIGHT.—MIRABEAU'S DEATH.—LAMETH MAKES ADVANCES TO THE MINISTRY.—BREACH BETWEEN LAMETH AND ROBESPIERRE.—THE QUEEN AND THE EMPEROR LEOPOLD.—FLIGHT OF THE KING.—GENERAL REVOLT.—LOUIS ARRESTED.—INTRIGUES OF THE DEMOCRATS.—FEEBLENESS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.—TUMULT IN THE CHAMP DE MARS.—INSUFFICIENT REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

THE greatest injury which the overthrow of the Church inflicted on the Revolution was the change it produced in the attitude of the King.

Before that event, the feelings of Louis XVI. towards the Revolution had not been altogether hostile. This good-humoured, dull man had no political opinions at all. While he was young he had seen the Church, the Noblesse and the Parliaments, in strife with one another and with the Crown. All the opposition which the Government met with, came from this quarter, and both Turgot and Calonne had taught him, that the abolition of feudal privileges would be alike beneficial to King and People. Under these influences, Louis had called the States-general, to free himself from all kinds of trouble, strife and constraint, and at the same time to further the prosperity of his people. He was therefore at first extremely astonished that the distress grew worse than ever, and that an unexampled discord filled the Kingdom. He was then induced to accept the unfortunate Breteuil Ministry, in order to put a speedy end to the disagreeable scandal. He had so little selfishness, and at the same time so little judgment, that he was on the point of delivering himself and the Kingdom entirely into the hands

of the ancient privileged Orders. Since that time, the more furiously the storm raged, the more completely did he retire into himself. The personal insults which he received on the 5th and 6th of October, and on innumerable subsequent occasions, were not what he felt the most. He was, indeed, fond of popularity, and enjoyed the clapping of hands and *vivats* of the people, but he would have thought it a sin to to resent a personal injury. On the other hand he perceived with satisfaction, that the Ministers troubled him far less than formerly with the details of business. When, in former times, Turgot opened his portfolio without any regard to his hours of sleep, or his hunting engagements, Louis used often to say with a sigh! "What, another memorial!" Now it was sufficient if he attended the regular sittings of the Council of Ministers, and heard the proposal which best suited his disposition, *viz.* that he should agree to what the National Assembly demanded. It was not merely the exertion of his own thought and will which he shunned, but the personal responsibility from which he now thought himself relieved. Whence should his timid and weak nature derive an impulse to take any other course than the one proposed to him? His intellect was very narrow; the few thoughts he had slumbered under a thick covering, and he had not the slightest conception of the causes and effects of his times. His conscience however was very sensitive; he thought little of political faults, but much of moral transgressions. He was like a blind man who fears at every step to injure some other person, and who is nevertheless perpetually called upon to guide others. He was therefore equally dependent and hard to lead. He resisted all sudden influences, especially when they couselled decision and activity. "Dip two ivory balls in oil," said his brother, "and hold them together, and then you may keep the King to a steady course of action." Yet those who were about him for any length of time, and transacted regular business with him, were sure in the end to gain an influence over him;

and men like Necker or Lafayette, especially, who were so great in all small resources, and so undecided upon all great questions, could always reckon upon Louis's consent. He dealt with them, as formerly with Count Maurepas; he listened to a hundred other counsels besides theirs— had no power of distinguishing between right and wrong—and after some hesitation signed the proposal of the Minister. Where the issue of any such measures was unfortunate, he would quietly remark with undisturbed patience, that he had foreseen the mischief.

If any virtue can exist without action, he was, doubtless, the most blameless man among his political contemporaries. But even the virtue of a helpless and inactive man often becomes, in human affairs, the source of error and destruction. Perhaps the only strong feeling in the King's heart was his affection for his wife and children; which at first only appeared to him as a christian duty, but had acquired strength and liveliness from habit. Marie Antoinette, however, was worthy of far other feelings. The joyous frivolity with which she had formerly made her *début* at the French Court, and awakened wrath and deadly enmity by her easy *nonchalance*, had faded and withered amid the storms of the Revolution. The strength of her pure character was no longer concealed beneath a lax exterior; she possessed great sagacity and undaunted courage; and it was not without reason that Mirabeau, on one occasion, declared, that the only man about the King was his wife. But even she lacked the qualities that would have enabled her to keep him in a consistent course of action. She had for many years taken part in political affairs, and had promoted and overthrown more than one Minister. But all this was the result of personal liking or disliking, and never of unprejudiced reflection, or well-founded consistency. She was wanting both in knowledge and steadiness, because she had no real interest in matters of State and policy. The Revolution had, indeed, wounded her in her deepest feelings,

and when the King was daily hesitating, whether he could with honour assume the character of a constitutional monarch, Marie Antoinette was firmly resolved, as far as in her lay, to hinder such a degradation. Yet she had no more settled plan of carrying out her opposition than the King himself. In one respect only was she perfectly clear and immovable, and that was in her aversion to those persons to whom she had once taken a dislike. Above all she abhorred the great noblemen who had taken up liberal opinions and joined the Revolution. She could less easily forgive the moderate opposition of the *Marquis* Lafayette, and the *Count* Mirabeau, than the coarsest abuse, and the most murderous attacks, of the democratic *bourgeois*. She shared, in fact, the prevailing sentiment of German Princes, that especial loyalty and devotion to the Court are to be expected from the nobility. With such feelings, it was impossible for the Queen to achieve any important success, or even to exercise any continuous influence. She was roused for the moment by indignation, sense of duty, and insulted dignity, only to sink again in weariness and exhaustion. She was fully capable of heroism and self-sacrifice, but not of that steady perseverance which alone could enable her to serve the King. All that she did only increased the dread which Louis entertained of every perilous undertaking, and every danger to his family. And in those times there was no other choice than between danger and destruction.

In this case too, as in all others, the King was guided by his religious feelings; the ruin which might be in store for him in the future he committed to the hand of the Lord; but voluntarily to expose his family to danger appeared to him a transgression of God's commandments. This was the key-note of all his actions, whether in the council of his Ministers or amidst the roar of the Parisian mob.

In the narrowness of his mind, he had no other compass amid the sea of troubles, than his moral and religious consciousness. When his meditations utterly failed to enable

him to see his way in political matters, he remembered that we are forbidden to take thought for the morrow; when the rigour of the times affected him too deeply, he found consolation, support and hope, in the bosom of the Church. In all his difficulties he had but one determination—one guiding principle—never to commit sin.

After the fall of Feudalism, it would have required no great power, or extraordinary judgment, to reconcile such a Prince to a parliamentary government. We have seen that he put up with a state of things which was the opposite of all government. And when even he could not but perceive the impending ruin, he did not go so far in his reactionary views, as Mirabeau considered indispensably necessary. But the Church question produced an entire change in him. He looked at the matter from the same point of view as the peasants, who had banded themselves together and shed their blood at Nismes. The unlawful election of Parish Priests and Bishops desecrated the Sacraments in his eyes, and the violation of the Papal prerogatives cut him off from union with the Church, and thereby imperilled the salvation of his soul. And all this he was not only to endure, but to ratify by his sanction. In the agony of his heart he made up his mind to the worst step of all—to a disingenuous act, in the hope that the opposition of the Pope would after all prevent the successful establishment of the new Ecclesiastical system: he gave his Royal assent to the "civil constitution" of the clergy.

From this time forward an impassable barrier lay between him and the Revolution. There had been moments, perhaps, in which he had been able to comprehend that he ought to place himself at the head of the new movement,—to clear the ground of what was old and obsolete—and to aid in erecting the fabric of the State on a new and more lasting foundation. *Now* the Revolution was in his eyes sullied and poisoned, and he saw no instruments within its limits with which he could conscientiously work. He still, indeed, con-

tinued to receive the proposals of Mirabeau, that he should retire to a town in the interior, and summon all loyal Frenchmen to rally round a counter-constitution. But at the same time his former unlucky friend Breteuil once more obtained influence over him, and urged him to flee to a frontier town, and crush the Revolution by the aid of the foreigner. This was in Oct. 1790; for some months the King wavered between the two systems; but alas! the National Assembly took only too good care to impel him to the more fatal course.

The National Assembly had gone too far to retreat, and the consequences of their own acts perpetually urged them on. After the overthrow of the Church they dared not trust the King, and by continually throwing up barriers against the exercise of the Royal power, they rendered all government impossible. Mirabeau, the only man who could control them, had been in the highest degree exasperated by the issue of the late Ministerial crisis. A second time he had lived to see his financial measures adopted, and the vital conditions which he had attached to them—the formation of a capable cabinet—disowned. He saw that he had been eagerly made use of, and then constantly thrown aside. He saw his best-contrived plans diverted to the furtherance of destruction—his popularity imperilled without any compensation in the shape of power—and, what weighed no less with him, he saw the position which he hoped to occupy in history compromised. It was only too natural, therefore, that he should be inspired with the greatest wrath against the Court, the Ministers, the Conservative party, the Clergy, and every thing which crossed his wishes. His terrible strokes fell on every side; he was more violent and unmeasured than ever in his language from the rostra; and he was at the height of his popularity with the revolutionary mob. He himself was any thing but satisfied with the course he was now taking; he confessed that he was doing violence to his most secret wishes; but he declared, repeatedly, that he could not act otherwise. What made matters worse,

the Church question entered into a new phase at this very time.

After the civil constitution had been sanctioned by the King, it began to be carried into operation throughout the whole kingdom. Two thirds of the Clergy in all the provinces refused obedience to it.[1] The schism which agitated the streets of the cities penetrated also into the remotest villages; the whole of the South of France took fire afresh, and by September 30,000 armed men in the mountains of Jalès had sworn to live or to die faithful to the true Church. No actual violence was as yet committed, but this region remained from this time the military head-quarters of Southern Catholicism. Hereupon the Ecclesiastical Committee brought a motion before the Assembly to require every Ecclesiastic to take the oath to the civil constitution within eight days,[2] and in case of refusal to pronounce his deposition, and to prosecute him as a disturber of the peace, should he continue to exercise his spiritual functions. There were still many Deputies who saw in such a step nothing but an aggravation of existing evils; Mirabeau, however, seized the opportunity of displaying his full revolutionary strength. It was perhaps the weakest point in his conduct, that though, at certain moments, he justly and clearly recognized the danger of a contest with the Church, he did not allow his convictions on this point a general and steady influence on his measures. His present amendment was indeed somewhat milder than the proposal of the Committee, but in his speech he brought

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[1] The accounts vary according to the party from which they proceed. I find exact statements in the Polit. Journal of 1790, which is certainly very conservative, but is not badly informed in its reports on the state of Paris. According to it our estimate is much too low. — [2] The words of the oath are, "fidelity to the nation, the law, the king, and the constitution." When Michelet concludes from this that it did not comprehend. the *constitution civile du clergé*, his mistake is clear from the fact that the decree was expressly laid before the King as a *décret constitutionnel*. Information on this head in the Moniteur, 25th. Jan.

forward, with crushing force, all that could be said against the old Ecclesiastical system.[1] The effect was irresistible, and he decided the question; but he decided it against himself and for the Committee. The Assembly ordered the Ecclesiastics to take the civil oath.[2]

No other measure could have so greatly accelerated the dissolution of the whole state of society; no other step could have so completely destroyed the understanding which had for a time existed between Mirabeau and the Court. Shortly before, the Emigrés had concocted a plan of marching from Turin upon Lyons, but the King had sent them his urgent commands to refrain from carrying it into execution, and had decidedly refused his co-operation. The Queen too, at that time, had come to the conviction that the principles of the new order of things were indestructible, and that the King could only better his condition by sincerely accepting them, and summoning a liberal Ministry to his Council. Now however, not the Emigrés, indeed, but Breteuil and his plans again gained favour in the eyes of Louis,[3] who no longer hoped to effect any thing by the means at his disposal at home. No fact in history is more certain than this; that the persecution of the Church by the National Assembly, which kindled a civil war in La Vendée, also drove Louis XVI. into an alliance with foreign powers. When the Assembly, by their continual pressure, had forced from the King the sanction of the decree, he exclaimed, "I would rather be a King of a village than King of France on such conditions;" but "patience," he added, "patience, there will soon be an end of this."

This state of things was all the more to be regretted, because at the very same time a decided change took place in

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[1] Nov. 26th 1790. — [2] Nov. 27th.— And on 27th Jan. a decree that the new elections for the places forfeited by the non-jurors should commence at once. — [3] The fresh powers granted to Breteuil to treat with foreign governments, bear the date Nov. 20th.

Mirabeau. The only member of the former Cabinet who had held his ground during the crisis of October, was Count Montmorin, the Minister of foreign affairs. He was an honourable man, well versed in the business of his Department, but utterly devoid of all firmness of character, who had hitherto been Lafayette's obedient friend, and had been protected by him against Mirabeau. He was, however, above all things a faithful adherent of the King; and when he had convinced himself how little he could depend upon the General for the salvation of the Monarchy, he did not hesitate one moment to place himself, for the King's sake, under the influence of Mirabeau. The latter therefore gained what he had long wanted, and once more proceeded with all his power to the work of restoring the monarchy. His projects, notes and propositions, succeeded one another with the greatest rapidity; and before the end of the year, he had developed a grand scheme,[1] according to which the attack was to commence in all quarters at once. But strong as he was, he could not undo the past. A whole year of bad government, and feeble administration of the law, had done their work;—the army was demoralized and the hands of the majority in the Assembly bound by anarchical precedents. For a whole year, the needy classes had been in a state of agitation, and the patriotic Frenchmen in a state of suspicion; and lastly, the nation was divided by the Church question, in which Mirabeau himself had taken the most violent part. His very scheme, therefore, shews the greatness of the danger, and the weakness of the means at his disposal. The beginning and end of his memorial was nothing more than a recommendation to prepare the mind of the public, and we see that he kept back his real plan of operations for the hour of action. It was not till some months later that he brought it forward. He hoped to induce as many as half the Departments to demand the dissolution of the Assembly; the

[1] Dec. 23d.

King was to repair to Compiegne, and, under the protection of Bouillé's troops, summon a fresh Assembly to revise the Constitution. To this new body certain fixed and unalterable principles were to be offered for acceptance, *viz.*: two Houses —absolute *veto* of the King—unconditional subordination of the administrative authorities to the commands of the Ministers —irrevocable abolition of feudal privileges—and confiscation of one-third of the Church property for the use of the State. But he was not even destined to take the preliminary steps; for although the King approved of his proposals, although in accordance with one of these, a secret police was organised in Paris, yet the real wishes of Louis took in the end a different direction. He was no longer willing to accept deliverance from Mirabeau's hand, since the quarrel concerning the Church had placed the barrier of conscience between himself and his dreaded ally. While Montmorin was consulting with Mirabeau, the King corresponded with Bouillé concerning an escape to the frontier. His only thought was still of deliverance from the trammels of his Parisian abode.

And he had indeed only too much reason to be impatient, for the licentiousness of the mob was daily increasing. The Royal family itself was several times, in quick succession, insulted; the democratic press out-did itself in coarse and venomous violence. New clubs were continually formed, and grew more and more immoderate in their demands. One speaker advocated the formation of a legion of tyrannicides; another, the political emancipation of women, and another declared that the Revolution ought to be made permanent, until every body was in the enjoyment of a plentiful income. The Jacobins organized a so-called fraternal society of both men and women from the dregs of the people, whose business it was to scream and fight when they could not obtain their object by discussion. In the Faubourg St. Antoine, Danton's friend, the brewer Santerre, had completely supplanted Lafayette in the favour of the National Guard. Street riots, ill-treatment and murder of Royalists, threatenings

and persecutions of Ecclesiastics, were the order of the day. But the chief object of all the fury and abuse was still the Queen. It was not wonderful that she longed for escape from such a condition as a deliverance from diabolical slavery.

But what next! It was but gradually that the Queen arrived at any clear ideas upon this point.

She did not wish to conquer by the help of the Emigrés, nor to restore the *ancien régime.*[1] Calm reflexion plainly shewed her that such a restoration was as impossible as for one man to oppose a hundred. She saw that a victory of the Emigrés would throw the King into the shade, and deliver her up into the hands of her old adversaries. Above all she was convinced that even the appearance of being in league with the Emigrés must irretrievably annihilate the Monarchy in France. If this scheme therefore, as well as Mirabeau's projects, were rejected, two ways still remained open to the Royal family. The one was to fly to La Vendée, or the South of France,—to place themselves sword in hand at the head of the catholic insurgents. The other was, to trust to the support of the great Powers, and especially of her brother the Emperor. The Queen had courage enough to take the former course, but the character of the King rendered the adoption of it impossible. Louis regarded civil war, as Mirabeau did bankruptcy, as the very worst of all things, and under no circumstances to be thought of. He revolted at the very thought of wholesale bloodshed, and

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[1] On this point, as well as of the views of the emperor Leopold, the secret and confidential correspondence between them (Revue Retrospective 1835) leaves not the slightest doubt. Our reasons for not noticing—in addition to these letters—the further correspondence of the Queen, as published by Hunolstein and Feuillet de Conches, may be seen in Histor. Zeitschrift, B. 13, p. 164. In these collections there are so many spurious passages, that the mere assurance of the publishers is not sufficient to lend credit to documents which have no other proofs of authenticity.

he had not read in vain that Charles I. had lost his head on a charge of commencing a civil war. If, on the contrary, he fled to the Eastern frontier of his kingdom, a man of Louis' character might for a while conceal from himself that he was just as certainly bringing on a civil war, and a foreign one into the bargain. His idea was to throw himself into a fortress, to surround himself with a few loyal French regiments and some thousands of Austrians, in the first instance, as a support. The present state of things was so intolerable that there seemed not the slightest doubt that a great number of Frenchmen would rise at the call of the liberated King. There was no apprehension on the part of the King's advisers of a violent outbreak of National feeling, for they felt themselves quite free from any reproach of treachery to their country, since the foreign troops were only intended to support the good cause of the King, and would certainly have no wish to deprive him of his territory. If by these means they should be victorious, the grand results of the Revolution,—the overthrow of feudalism and the privileges of birth—the unity of the imperial government —equality before the law—emancipation of the soil and of trade—would still be secured. The exact form of the constitution would be decided by circumstances. It might be based on the principles of Turgot, or on the more important part of the Royal declaration issued on the 23rd of June 1789, according as their present plans turned out; or they might even anticipate the laws of Bonaparte. On these points nothing further was decided than the necessity of securing and strengthening the prerogatives of the King.

These matters were secretly and restlessly deliberated in the Tuileries, during the winter months of the year 1791. No tidings however of what was going on had passed the frontiers of France, except that Marie Antoinette had asked in an indefinite manner at the Court of Vienna and Madrid, whether any help was to be looked for from them. Of their special plan only the first step, the flight to some border

fortress was discussed with Bouillé.[1] Mirabeau's proposals ran parallel with this preliminary act, but were altogether unconnected with it. The old hero of the Revolution had now assumed a decided attitude, and stood openly opposed to the Jacobins in the Assembly on every occasion. This party, after having carried their motion, in January, to compel the Ecclesiastics to take the civic oath, made a corresponding attempt against the Noblesse, by demanding a severe penal law against their continually increasing emigration. Lameth, Barnave, and Duport vied with one another in the violence with which they urged this measure; but they only gave Mirabeau an opportunity of evincing his superiority, not only in the Assembly, but even in the Jacobin club, and the law against the Emigrés was shelved.[2]

He succeeded soon afterwards in averting a decree conferring on the Assembly the power of choosing a Regent in case of a royal minority. The Court, who regarded this measure as a strong demonstration on the part of the Orleanists, seemed especially pleased by this success of the great orator. Montmorin felt confident that the King and

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[1] It is true that we everywhere (and lately again in L. Blanc, V. 164) meet with a letter of Louis to the King of Prussia, professedly of the 3d Dec. 1790, in which he calls on the latter to summon a congress of all the Powers with a view of intervention. This letter is generally taken from the *Mémoires d'un homme d'état*, and has gained credit through its supposed origin from the papers of Hardenberg. Beauchamp, the author of this part of the *Mémoires* has certainly received a great variety of information, but most of it is incomplete, or in a wrong connection. He took this letter from Bertrand's history, and Bertrand from a contemporary pamphlet. But in the latter, as well as in Beaulieu, it bears the date 1791, and this is evidently correct, and Bertrand's emendation to 1790 quite impossible, for it mentions the acceptance of the Constitution, Sept. 1791, which Bertrand arbitrarily interprets as the acceptance of some constitutional decrees. It also mentions Heymann's sojourn in Berlin, which began in the summer of 1791, and a letter which Dumoustier brought to Paris, Oct. 1791. — [2] Feb. 28th.

Queen would trust principally to Mirabeau's guidance; and the Austrian Ambassador, Mercy, at that time in Brussels, used all his influence in the same direction.[1] But the King by no means gave up his correspondence with Bouillé; and although the latter earnestly warned him against undertaking a secret flight from Paris, he received a letter from Louis about the 10th of March, directing him to prepare the fortress of Montmedy for the reception of the King, towards the end of April. So uncertain and wavering was Louis' confidence in Mirabeau.

Under these circumstances, we must regard it as fortunate for the great orator that his life came to an end at the moment that the great object of his life became unattainable. Worn out by all that most quickly consumes the strength of man—over-exertion, excitement and voluptuous pleasure—he died after a short illness on the 4th of April 1791. The first period of the Revolution closed with his existence. The aims of those who rushed forward to fill up the vacancy occasioned by his death, were not long left doubtful. Mirabeau had directed all his efforts to the creation of a parliamentary government, and of a Ministry formed from the majority of the Representatives of the people; three days after his death, Robespierre called upon the National Assembly to prohibit any deputy from undertaking the office of Minister for the next four years. On the principles of 1789 it was impossible to rear the fabric of legal order; everything tended towards an outbreak.

The licence of the democrats in Paris no longer knew any bounds. A Papal Breve which rejected the civil constitution of the Clergy was the signal for incessant riots. The mob stormed the monasteries and whipped the nuns; the religious services, which the orthodox catholics celebrated in a private church, were interrupted by repeated acts of violence; the Cordéliers, in a dictatorial manner, called upon the King to

[1] This is clearly proved by his letters to La Marck of April 4th and 10th.

drive the traitorous priests out of his chapel. Wherever Jacobin elements existed in the provinces, similar scenes occurred. In Bordeaux the Sisters of mercy were plunged into the river and drawn out again half dead; and a great number of the country priests narrowly escaped death at the hands of their democratic parishioners. The King, who had meanwhile postponed his flight on other grounds, endeavoured at any rate to escape these annoyances; and declared his intention of celebrating Easter at St. Cloud, to avoid giving offence in Paris by employing a non-juring priest. But his oppressors had suspected his wishes even longer than he had entertained them. When he was on the point of driving out of Paris, the mob seized the reins of his horses, the National Guard refused to interfere, and even Lafayette was not able to clear the way for him. The King was obliged to return home, and was informed that he would not be allowed to fly from his country to the Emigrés; and that it would be the worse for him if he and the Queen did not receive the Holy Sacrament from a priest who had taken the oath.

This was a little too much even for those who had hitherto been leaders of the Left. Lafayette, who had during the last year been violently attacked by the democratic press, beheld with terror the decline of his popularity. Barnave had some months before attempted a reconciliation with Montmorin, and shrank back in terror from the increasing coarseness and brutality of the revolutionary movement.[1] The Lameths and Duport observed, that the subordinate leaders, whom they had hitherto used as their tools, were independently directing the insurgents, and superseding them on their own ground. They were no longer sure of predominance in the Jacobin club, of which they were them-

[1] Montmorin's *Letters*. The universally current story that Barnave was suddenly converted in the travelling carriage of the Queen by the emotion caused by her grief, is only a little biographical *effect*.

selves the founders. Since the death of Mirabeau too, they had reached the most critical point in the life of a demagogue; they were on the point of taking the helm of the State, and therefore began to look with very different eyes on the engines of destruction which their hand had formed. Alexander Lameth had several conferences with Montmorin; the war minister, Duportail, hitherto an ally of Lafayette's, began to turn towards the rising sun, and expressed his wish to be guided by Lameth or Duport alone. In short, the prospect of forming a Ministry awakened conservative ideas in these chiefs of the sovereign people. Their general policy remained the same, but both they and Lafayette, with his associates, consented to confer with the Ministers as to the best means of calming the popular ferment. Lafayette adopted the extreme measure of sending in his resignation in order to test the amount of his influence over the National Guard. As the majority of the battalions assured him of their continued devotion, he once more entered upon his office, and was able to give a certain guarantee for the preservation of public order. The King however had to submit to very hard conditions; no mention was to be made of the journey to St. Cloud, but on the contrary, Louis was obliged to go to mass in his parish church in Paris, and Montmorin sent a circular note to all the Courts of Europe, in which the King expressed his warm admiration of the constitution, and assured them of his personal freedom.[1] We may judge from these facts how strong was the suspicion entertained against the plans of the Court, and how correct in the main were the conjectures formed respecting them. The Jacobins were more especially afraid of the long-detested Bouillé. The war Minister himself did every thing to weaken that General by taking from him his two most trustworthy regiments, and procuring a decree from the Assembly, that the soldiers could

[1] The correspondence between La Marck now shows the utter groundlessness of the report related by Bertrand de Molleville.

not be forbidden to frequent the clubs. The desired effect was rapidly produced; and after a few weeks Bouillé reported to the King, that his troops had lost all discipline, and become thoroughly democratic in their sentiments.

But the Court was no longer to be diverted from its purpose. Soon after Mirabeau's death, and probably about the beginning of April, Mercy had been requested to hold 10,000 men in readiness on the Belgian frontier, to be employed in case of need for the protection of the King. The Emperor Leopold consented to do this, though he watched with great anxiety the development of the plan. He feared the chances of flight, and shuddered at the possible consequences of failure. For several months he had been endeavouring to discover some safe course of action. He rightly judged, that an attack on the part of the Emigrés, by reviving the image of the old feudal State, would exasperate the mass of the nation against the King, as the probable accomplice of their detested assailants. In strict accordance with the sentiments of his Sister, therefore, he deterred the Count d'Artois from all military operations, and endeavoured to induce the other neighbours of France to act in concert with himself. This was no easy task, since all the complications and disagreements which we have spoken of in connection with the year 1790 still continued to exist, and in some points with increased bitterness. It was a fortunate circumstance for the Emperor that the person of the greatest weight in this affair—the King of Prussia—took an interest in the fate of Louis and Marie Antoinette from mere feelings of humanity, independently of all political considerations. After he had assured himself of the neutrality of England, Leopold might fairly hope, in spite of all his other difficulties, to have his hands free for the execution of his plans in France.

These were for the present of a very innocent nature. His own habitual tendencies, the insecurity of his position in other respects, and his personal views, all contributed to

render him averse to war. He hoped to attain his object by intimidation alone. In the first place Louis's Bourbon cousins of Spain, Naples and Parma, were to protest against the constraint put upon him. Then, in order to give weight to this protest, troops were to advance from all sides to the French borders. Not only Spain but Sardinia, Switzerland, and several German Princes, had bound themselves to set an army on foot for this purpose; and the Emperor, judging from the disinclination to war manifested by the Jacobins in 1790, had no doubt that all the Parisians would call on the King to mediate;—that the Royalists on the borders would rise in arms, and that in this way the King would easily find an opportunity of improving his position. He therefore implored the Queen quietly to await at Paris the results of these events, and not expose herself to the dangers of an attempt at flight.[1]

These views seemed all the more worthy of consideration at that time—the end of May—because the change of purpose, referred to above, in the Jacobin leaders, seemed, in the course of that month to have proceeded very rapidly. Duport, Barnave, and the Lameths, attached themselves more and more closely to the club of 1789, and to Lafayette, whose attitude towards the Parisian Demagogues became daily more hostile. The National Assembly issued severe decrees against the abuse of petitions and placards; they were even induced by the general excitement to relax their severity towards the non-juring priests, and gave orders to suspend prosecutions for the present. The schism in the

[1] Correspondence between Leopold and Marie Antoinette. The letter of the Emperor, and the answer of the Queen of June 1st, show that Bertrand is mistaken when he supposes that the object of Durfort's mission was to effect an understanding between the Queen and d'Artois. He was only instructed to admonish d'Artois to be quiet.—The lucubrations of Buchez' (2d Edit. IV. 315) are still farther from the truth, as are also those of Louis Blanc, V. 326, who here, as every where, places blind confidence in the *homme d'État.*

Left thus caused, was fully declared about the middle of the month, when Robespierre brought forward a motion that no member of the present Assembly should be eligible for the next. The chiefs of 1789 and the Lameths opposed the measure, but it was popular with the majority of influential deputies, who thus gained an honourable excuse for not offering themselves for re-election; it was joyfully adopted by the Right, who saw in it the annihilation of their hated opponents; and lastly, it was energetically supported by the strangers' gallery, over which Lameth had no longer any power, since he ceased to lead the extreme Left. Robespierre triumphed. This was the first occasion on which he had taken the lead in the Assembly, and from this time forward he continued to be an important personage, and already announced from the rostra that whoever opposed him was guilty of a crime against liberty.

But the Queen placed none the greater confidence in Robespierre's new opponents Lafayette and the Lameths. She looked for no aid from them in effecting a radical change in the constitution favourable to Monarchy. Their want of firmness of principle had been too glaringly manifested, and their material power was small, as soon as they ceased to control the great mass of the proletaries. She saw no reason therefore to await in Paris, as the Emperor wished, the effect of an armed protest. She moreover remarked that the King was to play a very subordinate part in this scheme; whereas to bring the crisis to a satisfactory termination, it would be essential that he should outshine all others in strength and enterprising courage. She therefore wrote to the Emperor on the 1st of June, that she intended to abide by her original plan, and hoped to escape, about the 20th, from Paris to Montmedy; and she repeatedly begged him to hold a force of some 10,000 men on the frontier. Leopold replied on the 12th, that he could not get rid of his anxiety, but that every thing should be done according to her wishes. Until she had escaped from Paris therefore, he said, no one would

stir; but that subsequently to that event, she might reckon on Sardinia, Switzerland, and all the German forces on the Rhine frontier, especially the Prussian troops in Wesel;[1] he added that Count Mercy had received orders to support her with the entire Belgian army. But before this letter reached the hands of the Queen, the Royal family had begun their flight from Paris in the night of the 20th.

To understand the issue of this event and the effect which it produced, it is not sufficient to know the intentions of Louis XVI. The chief point of consideration is the light in which it was regarded throughout the country. During the preceding year, the minds of men in France had been excited by fears of foreign countries and the Emigrés. Every one thought, that as soon as the King had reached the frontier he would unite with d'Artois, introduce a hundred thousand foreign soldiers into the kingdom, and re-establish, Feudalism in the midst of blood and ruin. Such a prospect naturally roused not only the men of the clubs—the majority of whom expected to be hung on the restoration of order—and the proletaries, who in a regular state of things would cease to be supported at the cost of the State; that these should be hostile to Louis would, under all circumstances, have been a matter of course. Now, however, the real friends of their country feared to see France subjected to foreign influences, and stripped perhaps of its frontier provinces. The peasants feared the restoration of tithes, feudal privileges, and grinding taxes; the burghers remembered the insolence of the Noblesse, who would be again spitting from the boxes upon the heads of the *canaille* in the parterre; the soldiers dreamed once more of flogging, a low rate of pay, and exclusion from officers' commissions. Their new acquisitions seemed to be slipping from the grasp of the purchasers of Eclesiastical property, for which about 200 millions had

[1] This was incorrect. The king of Prussia had no intention at this time of interfering in the French troubles.

already been paid. All the enthusiasm, in fact, and all the public spirit, which still existed in the nation was stirred by the thought of freedom, human rights and patriotism; a return to the old system, brought about by foreign power, seemed to them both a material and spiritual suicide on the part of the nation. Not that the great majority were any longer blind to the deficiencies and mistakes of the Revolution. The state of things at which Ecclesiastical and Financial affairs had arrived, led the great mass of the citizens eagerly to desire the restoration of order and government; and the feeling in favour of monarchy, which had manifested itself a year before at the Federative festival, still existed unchanged and unimpaired. But they had not experience enough to trace the prevalent disorder, with any certainty or clearness, to its true source—*viz.* the blunders of the National-Assembly; and they regarded the non-completion of the constitution, and not the principles on which it was founded, as the origin of their misery. And now that the completion of it was close at hand, the King separated himself from the Assembly. Yet the issue would have been doubtful, if Louis could have persuaded people that he had no wishes in common with the Emigrés. But as all the world believed the very reverse, and the Emigrés themselves proclaimed the contrary with noisy zeal, the unhappy Monarch, at the very moment of his attempted escape, found himself alone amidst the millions of his subjects, the universal object of suspicion, rage and execration.

The first intelligence of his flight fell like a thunderbolt on the National Assembly; and it was only gradually that its members resumed the majestic repose of which we read in so many subsequent reports. The greatness of their sins against the King became the clearer to them, the more likely it now became that they should have to answer for them. For the first time they spoke in respectful terms of Louis, at the very moment when they had openly to put themselves on their defence against his attack. The distinc-

tions of party were once more lost-sight of; and the universal watchword was the defence of the country against foreigners. So little was known in the Assembly of the intentions of Louis, that even the Right joined in the same oaths of fidelity to the Nation with their late adversaries. The Left observed silence; the Jacobins assumed an attitude of expectation, and the street clubs disappeared. For the present the National Assembly endeavoured to maintain the forms of government, and instructed the Ministers to continue their functions; a new oath of fidelity was administered to all the officers, and orders were sent in all directions to stop the King.

On the 24th intelligence was received that Louis had been several times recognised on the road, and at last arrested at Varennes. This had taken place under the very eyes of Bouillé's dragoons, not a man of whom would stir a finger to prevent it. From the hill above the town, the son of the General saw the Royal carriage returning through the valley, and one of his cavalry regiments was willing to hasten to their rescue. But in all the neighbouring villages the alarm bells were already ringing, and every by-road brought armed peasants to the scene of action; and in a few hours there were six thousand of them between the King and his friends. In two days Bouillé himself was no longer safe, the very ground trembled under him; and, threatened by every one as a traitor, he fled a cross the frontier. Wherever the news was spread it occasioned a similar convulsion of feeling. Soldiers and citizens were animated with the same sentiments, and the Nobles and Officers were compelled to join them, or were driven out of the country. The alarm was sounded from the Flemish borders to the Pyrenees, and in Normandy, the most loyal province, every town and every village called out its Burgher Guard. In the fortresses, both men and women employed themselves in repairing the defences; in the villages the peasants promised to meet the enemy, if necessary, with scythes and axes; and

large numbers of the Burgher guards expressed their readiness to march out as national volunteers for the defence of the borders. Whereupon the Austrians remained in their quarters, and the Spaniards, who had shown themselves on the frontier, disappeared behind the mountains. France became aware that four millions of men stood under arms for the defence of national independence. The National Assembly seized the opportunity of ordering a uniform organisation of the Burgher Guards throughout the kingdom, and the formation of 169 battalions of national volunteers under officers chosen by themselves; sixty of which were in a few weeks sent into garrison on the northern frontier.[1]

No sooner had the King returned to the Tuileries, than it became evident that the excitement and indignation of the people was directed not against him or his throne, but against his supposed alliance with the Emigrés: and as this connection seemed dissolved by his arrest, the great mass of citizens and peasants immediately returned to their usual course of daily life. A noisy commotion was still kept up for a time by the political factions, the clubs, and the loose rabble of Paris, which formed the standing army for every revolt. These people thought that the time was now come to break down all resistance. Immediately after the apprehension of Louis, the boldest bandits among them had endeavoured to persuade the people to murder the Royal Family on their entrance into Paris, and thereby cut the Gordian knot. The consequence was, that the National Assembly, with the view of disarming the assassins, at first avoided taking any steps for the preservation of the throne.[2] The more cautious demagogues, meanwhile, were more zealously at work to effect the abolition of Monarchy and the declaration of the Republic. Several different cliques appeared side by side. The club of the Cordéliers, of which Danton was the leader, published a declaration, that every Frenchman

[1] Poisson, I. 332. — [2] Montmorin to La Marck.

was worthy of death, who was still willing to have a lord and a tyrant over him, and that their club counted as many tyrannicides as members. Some days afterwards, they sent an address to the National Assembly formally proposing the adoption of a Republican Constitution. Brissot's widely circulated journal, "The French patriot," zealously supported them. Its editor had been for many years one of those literary adventurers, of whom this age produced so many. He had written abusive articles against the Court in London—studied republicanism in America,—and since 1789 played an important part in the Municipality of Paris. He had an easy and plausible style, great activity in business, kind-heartedness and unselfishness in his personal relations. But in public affairs, he was driven by a restless ambition, and the shallower his character and acquirements, the more numerous and extensive were the plans he set on foot. He was one of those men who find pleasure in mere excitement, irrespective of results; and though unmoved by any other passion, he recognised no moral restraint which could moderate his ambition. He therefore played the demagogue in earnest; flattered the mob by representing property as a hateful privilege, and the needy as the only true champions of freedom. He declared that he saw no other means of salvation than in a thorough sweeping away of obsolete institutions, and a removal of an hereditary throne from the State, as the last remnant of Feudalism.

Robespierre pursued the same object with more caution; and while he almost contemptuously repudiated the word Republic, he endeavoured to clear the way to it of every hindrance and danger. Among the Jacobins he made a general accusation against his colleagues in the National Assembly, who were almost all, he said, hostile to the Revolution. When he came to speak of his own merits, and declared that by his liberality and frankness he had sharpened a thousand daggers against his own breast, every member of the Club took an oath to defend the life of Robespierre.

He then called upon the National Assembly to bring the King and Queen to trial;—and to consult the wishes of the country with respect to the future form of government. But of all the plans proposed, that of Marat was the shortest and simplest. He delared that there was but one means of rescue from the wide-spread treason, *viz.* to appoint a Military Tribune with absolute power, who would forthwith make an end of all traitors and semi-traitors, among whom he and his associates more especially reckoned those who were at present in power,—Lafayette, Bailly, Barnave, and the Lameths. "The National Guard," cried Desmoulins, "in its present organisation, is a dead-weight on the breast of the people,—we may gather their sentiments from the *bleu-de-Roi* colour of their uniforms,—and there will be no improvement until their shakos have been superseded by the woollen caps of the people." We cannot but call to mind, at this point, that Bailly and the Lameths had four weeks before dispersed the associations of workmen, closed the public workshops, and removed the strange workmen from Paris, by the aid of the National Guard. Exactly the same measure was in 1848 the signal for the most terrible contests—the street fights of June. Yet in 1791 the distress of the workmen was greater—their irritation was more recent and deeper—and their demands equally extensive. If their members and discipline were weaker than in 1848, this disadvantage was fully outweighed by the more complete derangement of all the ordinary relations of life. Whoever was not willing to give up rights and property, law and morals, was obliged to take the side of the King, whether they regarded him as worthy of honour or contempt—as a suffering martyr or an unmasked conspirator.

Those who had hitherto formed the majority of the National Assembly were thoroughly convinced of this, and therefore entered into a still closer union with one another. The Right scarcely took any part in the deliberations, but the club of 1789 made common cause with Lameth,

Barnave, and their adherents. The latter were only pursuing the course which they had entered upon in April. Barnave exactly expressed their sentiments, when he said, on the 15th., that whoever, after the overthrow of every species of aristocracy, was desirous of further revolutionary changes, could only be aiming at the ruin of all proprietors. Lafayette also declared, on hearing sentiments of a republican tendency expressed in his presence: "If you kill the King to day, I will place the Dauphin on the throne to-morrow, with the aid of the National Guard." In the National Assembly the moderate party had nearly a tenfold majority over the extreme Left; the National Guard in Paris was at their disposal against every attack of the Democrats; and in the country at large the predominance of the Monarchical party was beyond a doubt. In short, there was no lack either of good will or of external means, but they wanted the most essential things of all—good conscience and firmness of purpose. The Lameth party had been too long at the head of all the enemies of the King, and had too frequently denounced the Throne as the adversary of every kind of liberty. They had been too long accustomed to regard the humiliation of the Crown as their highest merit, and to listen with greedy ears for the noisy applause of the galleries. They now, therefore, thought themselves obliged to apologise to the people for every step they took in favour of the Monarchy. In the interests of order they wished to support the King, but in doing so they desired to seem as little royalist as possible. They therefore, in the first place, ordered the arrest of the King, and the institution of judicial proceedings against him. Their Committees were about to declare the journey of the King a crime, which only the inviolability of Louis prevented them from punishing; and it was not until they were reminded that the Queen would be thereby exposed to every kind of persecution, that they looked about for some other construction. Meanwhile the democratic excitement in Paris continued to increase, and the Jacobin club,

which had for a time been reconquered by its old leaders, deserted to Robespierre; every day which the Assembly wasted in irresolution added strength to the republican party. At the same time, the Emperor Leopold issued a proclamation at Padua, in which he earnestly calls on all the Powers to cooperate for the deliverance of Louis. It was known, too, that the King of Sweden and General Bouillé were planning an expedition against the Flemish or Norman coast, and the Lameths, with double terror, now saw the war impending, which they had already so greatly feared in 1790. At last the report of the Committees was brought up; it recommended that Louis should, for the present, be suspended until he had accepted the Constitution, but that Bouillé should be immediately proceeded against for high treason. The future restoration of Louis was hereby indirectly implied, but the Committee did not dare to make an express declaration of his innocence.

In whatever light we may regard this transaction, we shall find it as unjust as it was unwise. Of its legality we need say nothing; and as to its expediency, it was, as we have seen, even at that time evident, that the proclamation of the Republic under existing circumstances would leave no other choice than a military dictatorship over the citizens, or mob rule over the possessors of property. The existence of liberty and equal rights was bound up with the preservation of the hereditary Monarchy. Barnave was perfectly aware of this, and declared his conviction from the rostra in eloquent words. But having once arrived at the conclusion that the Monarchy ought to be restored, both he and all who entertained similar sentiments were bound by all the rules of policy, honour, and even selfishness, to uphold its cause with energy, openness and dignity. For every one who at that period defended the Monarchy was sure to draw upon himself the deadly enmity of the democrats, and a mere regard for self-preservation should have led him to do his utmost to strengthen the foundation of

the throne. It was indeed a most melancholy spectacle to see such an assembly, on a question of such vital importance, not doubting, indeed, what they ought to do, but either ashamed or afraid of expressing their convictions. At the very moment in which they chose their position, they were really undermining it; if they wished to preserve the Constitution, which entrusted the State to the King and the National Assembly in common, they were no more justified in giving up the King than the Assembly.

But the majority of the National Assembly considered that by their motion of the 13th of July they had gone to the very extreme of conservative boldness, and they passed it on the 15th after a stormy debate. They immediately became aware of what they ought to have foreseen, that their weakness had only facilitated the future success of the democracy, but had by no means appeased the present fury of the democrats. Every one knew that a revolt would certainly take place. A pretext for it was afforded by a petition for the deposition of Louis XVI., drawn up by Brissot, accompained by a declaration no longer to acknowledge him as King. This document was to be placed in the Champ de Mars, and after having been covered by the signatures of the sovereign People, was to be laid before the Deputies for their guidance. If this plan succeeded—if the signatures were numerous, and those who brought up the petition were accompanied by large masses of the people, the Assembly would quickly become aware of the irresistible force of the popular will. Desmoulins wrote in those days that the unfaithful Representatives of the people were fair game; and Marat called upon the people to cut of the thumbs of the prelates and nobles; and as to the Barnaves, the Sieyès and their adherents—to impale *them* alive! Meanwhile it became evident what the National Assembly might have done at that time, if it had chosen. The very attack which the King had made upon it by his attempted flight, had raised its authority to the height which it had occupied during the

first days of the Revolution. When on the 16th it called upon the Parisian authorities to take energetic measures for the preservation of order, the Municipality, the Bourgeoisie and the National Guard obeyed without hesitation. The expulsion of the strange workmen was immediately carried out to its full extent. The impression thus made was so great, that the Jacobin club—cautious, like its honoured member Robespierre—withdrew from the Republicans. On the following morning the National Guard occupied the Place de la Bastille, in order to isolate the Faubourg St. Antoine; nevertheless about 6000 men assembled on the Champ de Mars in the afternoon for the purpose of signing the petition. Thereupon the Municipality proclaimed martial law, the National Guard were despatched to clear the ground; and when the petitioners resisted, by throwing stones and firing a few shots, the National Guard put them to flight by a sharp volley of musketry, by which twelve [1] of the mob were killed. The terror which this occurrence caused spread like an electric shock through the whole democratic party; Marat hid himself in a cellar;—Desmoulins suspended his journal—Danton went off to his country seat, and Robespierre did not dare to sleep at home. They all expected the immediate dissolution of the clubs, and the restoration of the Royal power, and not one of them would have dared to resist.

But they gave their opponents too much credit for energy

[1] Protocol of the Commune. The important point in these occurrences is not to us the question afterwards debated by the Revolutionary Tribunal, as to how far Lafayette and Bailly were legally entitled to take the measures—(proclamation of martial-law—firing with blank cartridges—firing with ball)—they adopted. This is a matter of dispute, but there can be no doubt of the material importance of the revolt. And Louis Blanc, who has lately renewed the complaint that a number of peaceful petitioners were shot down, might have learned from the 20th June and the 31st May, that it is not always the least dangerous rebellions which began with peaceful petitions.

of purpose. Instead of closing the clubs, the Lameths hoped to outdo the Jacobins by a moderate opposition club, which they opened in the Monastery of the Feuillants. Instead of curbing the press during the prevalent excitement, they contented themselves by issuing a feeble warning in legal form. And when the revision of the Constitution came to be discussed, their political incapacity was fully displayed.

We have noticed the laws which had already been enacted, and have seen that they made every government, whether monarchy or republic, impossible. They gave to every individual whether strong or weak, honest or criminal, judicious or easily led astray, entire and uncontrolled license. Now that the party which had passed these laws had to rule by them, their utter futility was felt at every step. When once they had decided to uphold Louis XVI., they ought certainly not to have hesitated for a single hour as to their course of action. In the state of things in which they found themselves, they should have kept the King under lock and key, that he might not escape, as it were, out of the Constitution, or cease to exercise his executive power. They ought to have bound him fast, in order to compel him to rule. The absurdity was palpable; they must either summon another person to the throne or alter the laws.

Louis, on his side, at a moment when he was perfectly free, in the very protest which he signed before his flight, had left a programme behind him, and had enumerated the series of laws which he was ready to acknowledge. These were the decrees which he had signed before the 6th of October—*viz.* the annihilation of Feudalism,—the "Rights of man" —the popular representation in one Chamber, with the right of granting taxes, of initiating laws and of impeaching ministers;—and lastly, the suspensive veto. Mirabeau would have objected that this programme was too democratic for a large and demoralized State. But it was, in fact, exactly suited to meet the views of the majority at that time; it embraced the positive principles of the Revolution in their

full extent, and afforded a possibility, at least, of laying the foundation of a more peaceful government. It restored to the King his influence over the law, the army and the internal administration; to the Nobility their legal existence; and to the Church its canonical Constitution.

The party leaders were well aware of this, and Malouet, on behalf of the Right, endeavoured to come to an understanding with Barnave and Chapelier, who declared themselves ready to promote a thorough reform of the Constitution. But on both sides they were left in the lurch by a great body of their respective parties. The chief wish of the members of the Left, at that time, was to disconnect themselves with the reaction of the 17th of July, and to place their character,—as friends of freedom and the people —beyond a doubt. Barnave had forewarned Malouet of this tendency, and had sounded him as to the possibility of a union between the club of 1789 and the Right, and Malouet, who was really desirous of a final settlement, held out hopes. At the first division, however, the latter learned that his own party was in no degree superior to the Left, either in political insight or morality. At the second reading, the Right assumed the same attitude as the Austrians took up in St. Paul's Church at Frankfort in 1848; they refused to co-operate in any kind of reform, in order that the Constitution which they hated might perish as soon as possible by its own worthlessness. It soon became evident that the only impulse that could further the revision was to proceed from the policy of foreign countries.

The present possessors of power in France feared the outbreak of war, for they saw that it afforded but little hope of success abroad, and would inevitably raise the demagogues to power at home. They watched every step of the Emperor with anxious attention—compelled the King and Queen to exhort him to peace, and therefore mitigated the severity of the durance in which the Royal captives were held. They even attempted to negotiate with Count d'Artois, and in spite

of the growth of the armed Emigration, which after the 20th of June became almost a matter of fashion with the *Noblesse*, the Emigrants were only threatened with a higher rate of taxation of their estates. These mild proceedings, however, had not the least effect. A little army gathered round the French Princes in Coblentz to which the Rhenish Sovereigns gave every possible assistance, and Sweden and Russia sent considerable sums of money. At the same time the religious excitement in La Vendée assumed a more and more threatening aspect. The peasants shunned the sworn priests as if they had been lepers—withdrew themselves into the woods from the control of the Constitutional authorities, —and refused the payment of taxes and military service. Most of the border fortresses were in an indefensible condition, since, in spite of all decrees, neither sufficient money nor effectual superintendence could be found to put them into proper condition. The regiments on the German frontier, especially, had been reduced to the lowest degree of disorder by the shock of the King's flight; most of the officers had emigrated, and the soldiers were badly armed, and without discipline. It is true that a decree had been issued on the 4th of July to place the army on a complete war-footing, but there was still a deficiency of 30,000 men. On the 28th, the National Guard of the Kingdom was called upon to furnish 100,000 Volunteers for paid service; but they came forward very slowly, and moreover deprived the regiments of their recruiting parties. Under such circumstances a war with Germany would certainly have been hazardous.

These clouds however soon dispersed. The Emperor Leopold was informed of the sentiments of the ruling party in Paris, and had other very important reasons (of which we shall speak hereafter) to keep the peace. He feared the internal dangers to France, which would result from a war, quite as much as the Lameths. Brissot, from an opposite point of view, so entirely shared these opinions, that he

began to sound the war-trumpet in the Jacobin club as early as the beginning of July. The Emperor contented himself with continuing his diplomatic manifestations, and saw with pleasure their effect on the leaders of the French Assembly; but he was resolved in no case to use any other weapons than threats.

Under such circumstances the revision of the Constitution in Paris was summarily carried on. It is not necessary here to recapitulate its contents, since the essential points have been already noticed at the time when they were first brought forward, and those which we have not touched upon made no alteration in its general character. The central authorities, like those of the Communes and Departments, were entirely re-constructed subsequently to the month of August 1790. In both cases the complicated and clumsy structure of the old State, which had gradually grown up in the course of years, was levelled with the ground. Simplicity, distinctness, and suitability to the object in view, were made the sole guiding principles in the new organization—the framework of which has been partly retained to the present day. Many errors were, however, committed in filling up the details, as we have already observed in connection with the Tribunals and the local Magistracies. Insubordination of inferior authorities towards their superiors on the one hand, and servile dependence of all Authorities to the capricious humours of the populace, on the other, characterize every portion of the new democracy. The general result was of a nature entirely to justify the saying of the Empress Catharine, that in France there were 1200 legislators, whom no one obeyed but the King.

In the revision itself no change was made of any importance; the little that was done was favourable, not to the throne, but to the democracy. A short time before the flight of the King, the nomination of electors for the new legislative body had already taken place in most of the Departments. As these elections were carried on according to the

same law as those of the local Magistracies,—*i. e.* by the votes of all the enfranchised citizens,—the democrats loudly lamented on principle the exclusion of the non-voters, but had in fact carried their own candidates in the majority of instances. The only obstacle which still stood in their way was the regulation that no one could be chosen deputy who did not pay 55 *livres* in taxes. Robespierre made use of the pause which took place in the elections on the news of the King's flight, to remove this difficulty. He succeeded in carrying the abolition of this property qualification, in return for which Lameth's party bargained that the qualification of the members of the electoral college should be raised. Theoretically the change was in favour of the possessors of property; but as on this occasion the college of electors had already been chosen, and their election was held valid, the democratic party obtained the whole advantage for the approaching electors. This was all the more important for the radical leaders in Paris, because they exercised a very powerful influence over the mass of the people, by means of the uncontrolled freedom of the unions and the press. The Constitutional party, on the other hand, suffered a severe loss in the retirement of Lafayette from the chief command of the National Guard; whereupon both royalists and republicans, to both whom this civic-military power was equally disagreeable, joined in carrying a decree for the abolition of the influential office of Commander-in-chief. It was agreed that his functions should in future be exercised by the Commanders of the six legions in turn, for the space of a month. This was, in fact, exposing the public order of the capital to the freaks of chance;—with its unity and continuity, the chief command lost both its influence and security.[1]

No better results were obtained in the department of public economy than in that of politics; the regulation of

[1] Mortimer-Ternaux, I. 33.

finances, and the revision of the constitution were alike neglected. As regards the revenue, the 20 months from the beginning of the Revolution to the end of 1790 shewed a falling off of 442 millions, in addition to the old deficit; and the first six months of 1791, a further deficit of 145 millions. The Constituent Assembly therefore had used 1323 millions out of their 1800 millions of *assignats*,—1109 of which were in circulation and 477 remained at the disposal of their successors. Consequently nothing was more certain than that the new Assembly, willingly or unwillingly, would be obliged to hold on in the downward course of paper money. The prospect before them, therefore, was general confusion and impoverishment in the rural districts, and a severe commercial catastrophe in the towns. The soil of France was in every way prepared for the efforts of the Jacobins and Cordeliers.

The Constitution, pregnant with such a future, was laid before the King for his acceptance on the 14th of September. Once more infinitely much depended on the will of the captive King; his word was to decide the fate of France and perhaps of Europe.

CHAPTER VI.

FLUCTUATIONS OF PRUSSIAN AND AUSTRIAN POLICY.[1]

Leopold defers the conclusion of peace with Turkey.—Prussia and England support the Porte.—Leopold makes advances to Prussia Bischofswerder in Vienna.—England offers her alliance to the Emperor.—Prussia follows this example.—Reforms in Poland.—Leopold wishes to strengthen Poland.—Polish constitution of May 3rd.—Prussia is contented thereby.—Second mission of Bischoffswerder.—Allarming differences at Sistowa.—Leopold's sudden change in favour of peace.

I. MAY 3rd 1791.

The Emperor Leopold awaited in eager suspense. the final result of the events which arose out of the King's attempted flight. During these same months his Government too had passed through a crisis, which though it did not fill Europe with the din of revolution, renewed all the dangers with which Austria had been threatened in the previous year. The points in question have been for the most part unknown or overlooked, but they are important enough to the history of the French Revolution to deserve more particular mention. Let us transplant ourselves to the beginning of that Congress, which, during the last days of September 1790, assembled the representatives of the great Powers of that period in the wooden houses of the Bulgarian town of Sistowa, to conclude a peace between Austria and the Porte. The public imagined that the proceedings would be merely formal, since the single condition of the treaty—the restoration of the exact *status quo*, before the signing of the peace—had been agreed to on all sides in Reichenbach.

[1] The following is derived exclusively from official papers in the Prussian Archives.

But Leopold had no intention of letting his adversaries off so quickly and cheaply. Independently even of the contents of the treaty, he had serious doubts with respect to the time of its conclusion. In spite of his promises at Reichenbach, he was still the ally of Russia, which continued by means of offers and threats to lure him back to Joseph's system of foreign policy. Wallachia, for example, which was occupied by the Austrians, was to be restored to the Turks; but Russia claimed it in virtue of an earlier treaty as a common conquest, and threatened forthwith to occupy it with her own troops on the retirement of the Austrians. As far as she was concerned, Catharine would listen to no peace which did not bring her an acquisition of territory, and rejected all the proposals of the three allied Powers with ostentatious arrogance. Her arms obtained brilliant successes both by sea and land. England and Prussia saw the moment approaching, when the Porte could only be saved by foreign arms, even from the Russians alone; and they continually prepared for war. No one could foresee what mighty conflicts were at hand. With such a prospect before him, Leopold was not the least inclined to bring his Turkish negotiations to a premature conclusion. Every prolongation of the uncertainty must render the peace the more advantageous to his interests, the more he had consolidated his power at home, and strengthened his relations in the rest of Europe.

After the first sitting of the Conference therefore, his Ambassador, von Herbert, afterwards joined by Prince Esterhazy-Galantha, brought forward a number of demands, which had scarcely any other object than to manifest ill-will. The *status quo*, they said, referred not only to the question of frontiers but to other international relations; and they therefore demanded the renewal of the previous commercial privileges possessed by Austrian shipping in the Black sea. The mediation of Prussia and the great Naval Powers, they added, which they had promised at Reichenbach to accept, by no

means implied an express reference to the Convention itself; on the contrary, such a reference would be inconsistent with the dignity of Austria. But that which made the most unfavourable impression on the Turks was, that the Austrian Envoys on the same grounds interdicted a guarantee of the new treaty by the mediating Powers; for the emptiness of the pretext, and the desire of a fresh breach, were too obvious to be overlooked. As the negotiations did not lead to a settlement of these points, the Envoys of the other Powers declared, on the 10th February, that they must consult their respective Courts, and the labours of the Congress were suspended for several months.

The conduct of Austria in respect to the engagements made at Reichenbach appeared in an equally unfavourable light on the other side of Europe, in Belgium. After much discussion, Count Mercy had at last concluded an agreement with the three Powers in December at the Hague. As however the Austrian troops were in possession of all the Provinces, and had stamped out the last sparks of resistance, the Emperor, while ratifying the other articles of the treaty, announced his intention of substituting for the old constitution which he had acknowledged at Reichenbach, the laws of Maria Theresa—which had in many respects paved the way for those of the Emperor Joseph, and had strengthened the prerogatives of the crown. The three Powers protested without effect, and thereupon withdrew the promised guarantee for the rule of Austria over Belgium. Yet the Government at Brussels continued in the same course, and kept up never ending differences with Holland. At one time, a long promised settlement of boundaries was unnecessarily deferred; at another the reduction of the Belgian garrisons to the stipulated strength was refused; and at last a violent war of diplomatic notes was begun respecting the residence of Belgian exiles in Holland. In short, both in the East and in the West, the encroaching Lorraine policy developed itself, more slowly and cautiously indeed, but

also more completely and systematically, than under the Emperor Joseph II.

There was the less prospect of a check being given to the progress of Austria, because the position of the Government in Hungary was finally settled in February. We have seen that the Sclavonians had done their best to promote the coronation of Leopold; they now received a reward for their services, which, though it flattered their feelings, had no practical result for any one but the Emperor. Transylvania on the one side, and Illyria on the other, were withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Hungarian Government, and each of these lands was subjected to a Chancery made up of zealous royalists. This was done with the same political views, with which Leopold at a subsequent period subdivided first Illyria itself, and then Styria and Carniola, into several smaller governments—the same with which he separated Milan from Mantua, and endeavoured to isolate the several provinces of Belgium. Joseph had forced the old national territorial complexes into his arbitrarily formed administrative districts, and thereby outraged all local interests and feelings of kindred; Leopold split up these nationalities in the most effectual way, by cherishing every little village patriotism; and he thus carried on the work of his brother without losing his own popularity. The Magyars indeed, bitterly complained of the losses they were to sustain; but Leopold managed to delight them also by first burdening the establishment of the Illyrian Chancery with a number of other disagreeable conditions, and finally renouncing them, to the infinite delight of that hot-blooded people. He skilfully suggested that this very opposition on the part of Hungary had compelled him to those sad sacrifices at Reichenbach; whereas the Turkish booty would otherwise have fallen to the lot of his kingdom of Hungary. The Hungarian Diet, therefore, were possessed by no other feelings than repentance and enthusiasm; they doubled their grants of money, and

offered him as many recruits as he could desire, with the cry, "Down with the treaty of Reichenbach!"

In the midst of these events, the Porte, continually threatened by Austria, and hard-pressed by Russia, no longer hesitated to make use of its Prussian Alliance; and at the beginning of March sent an urgent application to Berlin for help, which was forthwith sent on to the Hague and London. None of these Courts were particularly pleased by the crisis which had arisen; but there was no hesitation on the part of any of them to abide by their treaties, and to protect the Porte by every means, in the first place against the attacks of Russia. Preparations for war were carried on with redoubled energy in the ports of England and in the garrisons of East Prussia. The particular generals and bodies of troops which were to march to the war in Lithuania were immediately designated; and in London it was determined to send one strong fleet into the Baltic, and another into the Black Sea to operate against the Crimea. Should things come to extremities in this quarter, there was evidently no more important question than the attitude of Austria, respecting which neither Prussia nor England could come to a clear conclusion. The Austrian Emperor had indeed made peace with the Turks by the treaty of Reichenbach, but Kaunitz made a sharp distinction between an Austro-Turkish and a Prusso-Russian war. And when Leopold finally promised neutrality for the latter also, Kaunitz continued to affix the condition, that Prussia should seek no advantage for herself. "We demand of Russia," replied the Prussian Ambassador on one occassion, "nothing but the *Status quo ante*, but if we are once compelled to go to war, we must reserve to ourselves a claim of indemnification for our expenses." "And we," replied Kaunitz, "must protest against any such reservation."

During this unsettled state of the relations between all the powers, the Emperor Leopold gradually began to follow a new line of European policy. He was in no hurry, as we

have said, to come to a settlement with the Turks, but rather wished to leave matters to take their own course, and perhaps to secure some further advantage to Austria. But in no case did he wish to renew the war. It was just at this time that his Sister, persecuted to the very death, was besieging him with her supplicating letters; and although he repudiated, with all the obstinacy of his nature, the very thought of an active interference in the affairs of France, he could not altogether shut his heart to the prayers of Marie Antoinette, and could not but wish on her account to avoid new contests in the East. Then again, he took quite a different view of his relations to Russia, from that of his predecessor. While Joseph, in his hatred to Prussia, and his ambitions views upon Germany, had based his whole policy upon a Russian alliance, and readily opened to Catharine the way to Constantinople—Leopold regarded the extension of the Russian power, even as far as the Danube, as the greatest danger to Austria—to her dominion over the Southern Sclavonian and Magyars, and to the whole future of the Empire. He lamented that his Brother, in his eagerness for Bavarian and Servian conquests, had first given up the Polish Republic—the old ally of Austria—as a prey to the Russians, and then driven it into the arms of Prussia. He bitterly felt the cutting and arrogant tone in which Catharine now censured his peaceful policy, as if he were not merely withholding the promised help of an ally, but violating the fidelity which he owed to a liege Lord. Cautious, wary, and circumspect, he wished to precipitate nothing, to decide nothing prematurely, and to keep his hands free as long as possible; but on one point he had already made up his mind, namely that he needed greater independence of his Russian ally; and that he must therefore, discover some means of reconciling himself with his present adversaries.

The first step in the new direction was made immediately after the interruption of the negotiations consequent on the

Conference of Sistova. One of the Reichenbach plenipotentiaries, Prince Reuss, now Imperial Ambassador at the Court of Berlin, made the first advances by informing the King that Leopold was weary of the long feud between the two States, and earnestly desired a cordial union with Prussia. It is probable that Prince Reuss at the same time pointed out a direct personal colloquy between the two Monarchs, as the most effectual means to the end proposed; and alluded to the difficulties to which the traditional hostilities of the Ministry on either side, would give rise. At all events Frederick William immediately determined to send his confidant, Colonel Bischoffswerder, to Vienna, in order to learn more accurately the sentiments of Leopold, without the co-operation of his Ministers. Bischoffswerder, who had been for many years the constant attendant and councillor of his Sovereign, was a Saxon nobleman, without property, who had tried his fortune in many services, and had finally won the favour of Frederick William by an unlimited subserviency. Though a dull, empty-headed man, he had the tact to impose on the world by a mysterious air of importance; and though his character was of doubtful purity, his unbounded readiness to serve made him a convenient tool of the King. His political character therefore was exactly such as the Emperor would desire, since he was neither a match for Leopold in acuteness, nor capable of withstanding the seductions of the Imperial favours with which he was loaded. The Colonel immediately became an enthusiastic admirer of Leopold, and a zealous advocate of a close alliance between the two States. He deplored the mistaken policy of Frederick II., which had separated Prussia from her natural ally; whereupon Leopold declared that it would be easy to bring about a better relation. "I have," said he "my Herzberg in Vienna, as the King has his Kaunitz in Berlin; if we wish to cultivate a sincere friendship, we must dismiss them both." He pointed out the dangers with which the French Revolution on the one hand, and the Russian lust

of conquest on the other, threatened the peace of Europe; he promised to write to Catharine, recommending moderation and disinterestedness, and he hoped that Prussia in return would aid him, if necessary, against the Jacobins. On his departure he handed to the Colonel an autograph letter to the King, and expressed an earnest wish to settle all existing difficulties with Frederick William in a personal conference.

It is true that Bischoffswerder, when he returned to Berlin with his mind full of what he had seen and heard, did not immediately succeed in imparting his enthusiasm to the men in power. He found a decided opponent in the immediate neighbourhood of the King, in the person of his adjutant, Colonel Manstein, who manifested an entire distrust in the splendid promises of Leopold; and the King himself was of opinion, that the good intentions of the Emperor should first evince themselves by a speedy settlement at Sistova. He was ready, however, for other reasons, to comply with one of the Imperial wishes. The positiveness and self-sufficiency of Count Herzberg had long rendered him disagreeable to his Royal Master, and the King immediately commanded that no communication should be made to him respecting his new relations with Austria. The aged Finkenstein was the only one of the Ministers who was for the present let into the secret, in order that a confidential message respecting Leopold's offers might be forwarded to London, and a consultation had with the King's English allies on the means of turning them to the greatest advantage.

These unexpected tidings were at this juncture doubly welcome to the British Cabinet. In consequence of the warlike attitude of Russia, a Royal message had been sent down to Parliament, on the 25th of March, respecting the preparations which had been made in favour of the Porte, and had immediately raised a violent storm in public opinion. The Baltic trade was at that time a source of immense profit to London, and those engaged in it raised a loud protest against risking the loss of it by a Russian war.

This popular movement found an organ in Parliament in the entire Whig party, and by the middle of April the Ministry, although victorious in every division, had already determined to yield to public opinion. Pitt withdrew a threatening note which he had already prepared against Russia, and wrote to Berlin, that the King of Prussia must be aware that no British Government could run counter to public opinion.[1] The Duke of Leeds, the Minister for foreign affairs, retired from office; and his successor, Lord Grenville, undertook the task of coming to a peaceful, and, as far as possible, harmless understanding with Russia. It is clear that under these circumstances, the intelligence that Austria showed an inclination entirely to break off relations with Russia must have been hailed in England with delight. The English Ministers lost not a moment. The Emperor was then in Florence, where his second son had just assumed the reins of power, and Lord Grenville commissioned the young Earl of Elgin, on the 19th of April, to offer Leopold a defensive alliance with England and her allies, if he would promise to induce the Russians to make peace on terms agreeable to England. In this case too, a non-official agent was chosen, because Grenville trusted Count Kaunitz just as little as Leopold did Count Herzberg, and wished to treat with the Emperor himself without the interposition of the Austrian Minister.

This rapid action of the English Ministry at length roused the Prussian Cabinet from the suspicious irresolution with which they had hitherto met the overtures of Leopold. On the 1st of May, Count Schulenburg and Count Alvensleben entered the Ministry, and on the 3rd, the former, in concert with Finkenstein, presented a memorial to the King, which was intended to determine the future policy of Prussia. In this document, it was expressly remarked, that there was in general no inducement to enter into a league with Austria;

[1] *Conf.* Stanhope, Life of Pitt, II. 115.

that, on the contrary, the dilatoriness shown by that power in the negociations at Sistova, gave rise to well-founded, doubts of the Emperor's sincerity; but that the prospect of securing Leopold's neutrality in case of a war with Russia was in itself important enough to justify the acceptance of an Austrian alliance; that, consequently, the mission of Lord Elgin was a matter of rejoicing, since it could not but further the general objects of negociation commenced by Bischoffswerder; that it was especially desirable that Prussia should not enter into new relations with the Emperor, as a mere appendage of England, but should directly come to a settlement with Austria, and then open the way to the English of entering into the same treaty. The Ministers then proposed to communicate these views of Prussia to Prince Reuss, on condition that he should not report them to the Austrian Ministers, but confidentially to the Emperor himself. The King, whose main object was to inspire the Russians with respect, and to separate Leopold from Catharine, agreed to the proposal of his Ministers, and ordered that only Count Alvensleben, and not Herzberg, should be taken into the secret. The communication in question was forthwith despatched to Prince Reuss, who received it gladly, but in his position did not see the possibility of passing over Prince Kaunitz. The Berlin Cabinet therefore, taking into consideration that the Emperor would not, after all, take a step of such importance without the knowledge of his Ministers, gave up this last proviso. On the 12th of May the overtures for a league between the two crowns were forwarded to Vienna in official form.

Such was the origin of the notorious league between the two great German Powers, which two years later led Europe into the field against the French Revolution—helped to annihilate Poland—and filled the whole of Germany with discord. At the time of its conclusion, neither of the parties foresaw the consequences to which it would lead. Frederick William explained the new system to the the Marquis Lucche-

sini, who was his agent at Sistowa, by saying that he had sanctioned it after convincing himself that the Emperor was only thinking of his own security; that Prussia's sole object in the measure was, as far as possible, to isolate Russia. Leopold on his part meditated no attack upon a neighbouring country, but wished to fortify the position of Austria, and above all to free himself from the domineering influence of Russia. He had not however entirely made up his mind; he was still weighing possibilities against one another, and would perhaps at the very moment of decision choose an entirely new path.

While he was thus treating with Prussia, he was busily engaged in another quarter, in securing a position most important to the influence of Austria, from which he could dictate the terms of his friendship either to his Prussian or Russian rival. This new prospect was opened to him by a most remarkable internal change which was at that time going on in Poland.[1]

It had long been evident to every man of common intelligence, that the source of the external helplessness of this unhappy land lay in its own political anarchy. In every age the nation which disarms itself by moral corruption and dissension forfeits its existence; and in the 18th century, that period of conquest and ferment, a State which was not clad in iron was immediately crushed. The right of the stronger was almost recognized as a law; and it is certain that the public opinion even of the peoples themselves was not offended by it, unless it were influenced by selfish interests. Poland therefore might have foreseen its own fate, and the sole means of avoiding it. Yet 13 years had passed away since the last Russian treaty, without a single step having been taken towards the restoration of in-

[1] For the following, *Conf.* v. Sybel's *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. X. p. 387, and Vol. 11. p. 260, where he has examined the objections raised by Ernst Herrmann, and shown their groundlessness.

ternal order. We have seen that King Stanislaus himself took the side of Russia; but we must not conclude from this, either that he had no heart for his country and his people, or that he was entirely destitute of political and diplomatic ability. What he *did* want was thoroughness of understanding and character. His sagacity only served to make him waver helplessly between the evils of every scheme which was offered to his notice; and he became over-cautious from a want of mental power, and double-tongued from an absence of moral courage. He feared the threatening power of Russia and was therefore averse to oppose its successive advances; he did every thing in his power to prolong the dangerous friendship of Catharine, and yet was incessantly compelled by circumstances to enrage the mighty Empress by breaking his promises. Thus he had been sincerely rejoiced at the treaty he had made with Russia in Kanieff, being under the impression that he might collect a strong army at the instigation of Russia, and might then receive the hereditary crown of Poland at the hands of Catharine herself, as the reward for his military services. This calculation was just as foolish as the system pursued by his uncles, in 1762, and it was fortunate for Poland that he met with powerful opposition from another quarter. The estrangement between Prussia and the Imperial Courts might have bestowed on Poland, not only a brief alliance with her Prussian neighbour, but a permanent amelioration of her internal condition.

The patriotic party shewed no lack of zeal, but the condition of the country was so extremely miserable that the progress made was necessarily small. At an earlier period the Poles had excited the ridicule of Europe, by consulting two French philosophers as to the Polity best suited to their country. And it now became evident that nearly all the requisites for the reestablishment of a tolerable state of things were absolutely wanting. The peasants were utterly brutalised by their condition of serfdom, and hardly any

civic communities existed except in those parts of Great Poland in which German settlers had established themselves. The Nobility alone was considered to compose the Nation, and the great majority of them had been politically demoralized by their long continued and unbridled license. Beneath the personal gallantry and inflammable enthusiasm, which made so great an impression on foreign nations, were concealed a deficient education, self-seeking, and untruthfulness. All the testimonies, and unfortunately all the facts, of that period concur in this condemnatory judgement. In addition to this, the government was without money, servants, and troops; the nation was divided by religious discord; and the different parties were in alliance with foreign Powers. Nothing was more certain, than that the restoration of Poland could never be effected by her own unaided efforts.

Prussia had expressed her approval of the first reforms of 1789, but she was far from taking any decided part in promoting them. Herself a State at that time of hardly 6 millions inhabitants, whose prospects lay exclusively in the direction of Eastern Germany, and which, for four centuries, had carried on an irreconcileable feud with Poland—Prussia was as little inclined as Russia to favour the stability and development of this Republic of 9 millions of men. Herzberg himself made no secret of his sentiments, and his Envoy, the Marquis Lucchesini, dissuaded the Polish government from all radical changes, and especially from any large addition to the strength of the army, and the introduction of hereditary monarchy.[1] If Poland desired to make use of the friendship of Prussia for the furtherance of her own

[1] Herzberg, *Sur L'Alliance, &c*, Report made to the King on the 6th.—Lucchesini's despatches of the 10th and 11th July 1789. Unfortunately, it is no less certain that Lucchesini did not strictly confine himself to these instructions. It was with him, as with many envoys; in order to fulfil his mission—of gaining over the patriotic party in Poland—as splendidly as possible, he held out hopes which he was by no means warranted to raise.

purposes, she must—since the maxim in politics is "nothing for nothing"—give additional guarantees for the security of Prussian interests. Herzberg at the same time pointed out the way of doing this, by perpetually recurring to the former wish of Frederick II. to possess Dantzic and Thorn. Never, perhaps, was a more glaring political error committed, than that of the Polish Government in obstinately refusing to listen to Herzberg's proposal of an exchange of territory.[1] But some thought that they were sure of the aid of Prussia in consequence of her differences with the Imperial Courts, and others were angry because Herzberg did not offer the whole of Galicia, instead of only six times the amount of the territories of Dantzic and Thorn. And thus, though an alliance between the two States was formed in 1790, there never existed, for a single moment, that cordial harmony of interests and feelings, which can alone give security and permanence to international treaties. When, therefore, a few months afterwards, a peace was concluded at Reichenbach on the basis of the *status quo ante*, which put entirely out of question the recovery of Galicia by Poland, the Government at Warsaw were furious against their ally, whose plans they had themselves helped to frustrate. They seemed to think that Prussia had been guilty of treachery against Poland, and no Polish patriot would hear of Prussian friendship. These feelings were embittered by the fact, that Prussia, though she had given up her claim to Dantzic and Thorn in her negotiation with Austria, continued to look about for other means of getting possession of those two towns.

This position of affairs lay clearly before the searching gaze of Leopold, and he prepared with steady hand, and we must add, with far-reaching ambition, to turn it to his own advantage. During the very same weeks, in which he was entertaining Bischoffswerder with protestations of his eager

[1] This is the opinion even of Oginski, I. 118.

longing for the friendship of Prussia, he was employing every means in his power to renew the influence of Austria in Poland, and to form a strong party in that country. Poles of distinction were treated with the greatest consideration in Vienna, and received by the Emperor himself. The Prussian Ambassador at Warsaw reported that though no Austrian party had as yet been formed in Poland, Leopold was busily engaged in its formation; and the Prussian Government itself received notice that the Emperor had set on foot a plan for placing one of his Archdukes on the throne of Poland. Kaunitz, though personally more favourably inclined to Russia than Poland, informed the Polish Ambassador at Vienna, Woyna, in the month of March, of the intention of the Prussians and Russians to subject Poland to a new partition; and Woyna lost no time in raising the alarm in Warsaw. The charge was entirely groundless; for Prussia, at this very time, was engaged more actively than ever in preparation for the apparently inevitable war with Russia. But there remained on the minds of the Poles an impression of the most hostile intentions on the part of Prussia, and of the most friendly feelings on that of Leopold. And, in fact, the Emperor was sincerely desirous to reestablish and strengthen Poland. The materials at present in our possession do not enable us to trace the exact means which he employed at different periods for the furtherance of this object; but it lies beyond all doubt, that directly Poland had cooled towards Prussia, the maintenance of the Republic became one of the main objects of the imperial policy. Perhaps in the first, and at any rate not later than the second, half of the year 1791, the Emperor had made up his mind in favour of a system, according to which, the crown of Poland,—which had previously been worn for sixty years by the Saxon Electors—should be transferred for ever to this dynasty; so that each succeeding Elector of Saxony should become *de jure* King of Poland. It is not too much to say, that the success of this plan would have changed the

fate of Europe. A Monarchy of more than 11 millions of inhabitants, chiefly of Sclavonian race and Catholic religion, would have been established between Protestant Prussia and the Russian adherents of the Greek Church. The territory of this powerful Kingdom would have run far into Germany, and the hereditary feelings of its dynasty, and the necessities of its position, would have bound it to Austria by the closest ties. Prussia—at that time only half as strong as Poland and Saxony when united—would have felt their might equally strongly, in Königsberg, in Breslau and Berlin; and would have found itself thrown back in relative power by half a century. Russia would have been separated from the European world by a massive bulwark; and would have had to direct its views, and seek its development, in Asia and the Eastern world. Austria would have obtained a triumph of fully equal importance to the conquest of Bohemia in the Thirty years' war, and the subjection of Hungary in the war with Turkey.

Such being the views of the Emperor, the Polish discussions on the reform of the constitution were carried on with fresh vigour. The Provincial Assemblies declared themselves in favour of an hereditary monarchy in the line of the Elector of Saxony; the King—who in spite of occasional waverings had hitherto remained subservient to Russia—now definitively joined the patriots, and one law was passed respecting the Provincial Estates, and another respecting the political rights of the citizens. Meanwhile, the adherents of Russia and the *laudatores temporis acti* actively bestirred themselves; the intrigues of one party were crossed by those of another in inextricable confusion, and no one could foresee the issue. The 3rd of May however brought with it a most unexpected occurrence. The approaches to the Diet were occupied by troops; the King appeared with a strong military retinue, and ordered that instead of proceeding with their usual business, the Assembly should hear a proposal of the Foreign Office respecting the relations of Poland with

foreign Powers. The Royal command was obeyed, in spite of the violent opposition of the Russian party. The purport of this memorial, which had been compiled from the reports of different Polish Ambassadors, was, that new plans of partition were entertained by Russia and Prussia; that it was to be feared that the latter meditated the seizure of Dantzic and Thorn; and that the friendly Powers could suggest no other means of avoiding the threatened evils, than the immediate introduction of a new and stronger constitution. The King, thereupon, came forward once more, and in spite of the murmurs of the opposition caused the outline of a constitution, in twelve articles, to be read. The principal provisions of this act, the adoption of which would have changed the whole state of Poland, related to the legal *status* of the peasants,—the political rights of burghers—formation of two Chambers and an independent Ministry—abolition of the *liberum veto*—and, lastly, hereditary monarchy in the line of the Saxon Electors; with a special clause that the present Elector should be succeeded by his daughter. Immediately after the reading of these propositions, it became evident how complete had been the preparations for this *coup d'état*. A deputy rose and proposed that the constitution should be accepted, carried by acclamation, and immediately sworn to by the Assembly. The King took the oath on the spot, and the Deputies poured into the cathedral to do the same on their part. It was afterwards discovered that, on the evening of the 2nd, a majority of the Assembly, under the direction of Ignatius Potocki and Hugo Kollontai, had assembled in the Radzivil palace, and arranged beforehand all the particulars of this important act.

The suddenness of this revolution took every one, both at home and abroad, by surprise. King Stanislaus wrote to St. Petersburg himself, and declared that the new constitution would not be in any way detrimental to the friendship between Poland and Russia. He further promised, somewhat later, to preserve a complete neutrality in any wars in which

Russia might be engaged with other powers.[1] The Poles had sounded the Prussian Ambassador, a few days before the *coup d'état*, as to whether his Government would finally sanction the most important of the proposed reforms—the hereditary monarchy. He replied, as usual, in the negative; and was all the more bitter in his complaints that this point should have been carried, in spite of his opposition, by means of the *coup d'état*. The feeling in Berlin itself was not more favourable.

It was known that the leaders of the Diet, at that time, had always stood in close relations to Austria;[2] and though the Government of Berlin was not yet acquainted with the details given above, yet even the official account of the event left no doubt that its tendency was hostile to Prussia. The report of the Foreign Office had grounded the necessity of the *coup d'état* on the aggressive spirit manifested by Prussia; which, it said, was concocting plans of partition in alliance with Russia. This charge was made at a time when no more zealous feeling existed in Prussia, than to oppose Russia to the utmost. This feeling could not but be strengthened by the additional clause, which declared that the Powers friendly to Poland could advise nothing better, than a reform of the constitution. Who were these Powers! No one could suspect France, which was labouring under a terrible internal crisis, nor Holland, nor England, which had made

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[1] About the middle of June. Polit. Journ. 1790, p. 588. Prussia dissuaded him on the 21st of June, from making any communication to Russia without some special reason; I. 74. — [2] Despatch of the Prussian *Chargé d'Affaires*, Buchholz, from Warsaw, May 8th 1793. "Your Excellency may be assured of this, that the opposition of the Walewski and Rzewuski, which we have had to put down so forcibly, proceeds solely from the Polish Emigrants and the Court of Vienna. This is well known in Russia, which wonders that the Austrian government should patronise the Polish Emigrants. All these Emigrants are of the old Austrian party in Poland, against which I had to contend under his late Majesty."—The Emigrants of 1793 are just the originators of the constitution of 1791.

common cause with Prussia, and advocated the very cession of territory which was so odious to the Poles. Sweden and Turkey had but little weight in this question; but the Polish Government was greatly enraged with Denmark, which had almost openly suggested that the difficulties of the Turkish question might perhaps be solved, as in the year 1772, at the cost of Poland. Austria alone remained; and from the very first moment every indication pointed towards her; and every further step in the investigation tended to prove that though there had been no formal rupture of the alliance of 1790, the events of the 3rd of May were equivalent to a renunciation by Poland of the Prussian alliance in favour of the Austrian.

But even independently of this temporary concurrence of events, there were general grounds sufficient to dispel all doubts upon the subject from the mind of Herzberg. As early as the 6th of May, the Russian Cabinet, on his motion, had presented a report to the King respecting the new Polish constitution. This document represented that Prussia would be greatly imperilled, if a concentrated Polish monarchy should fall into the hands of an Austrian or Russian Prince—an event which could not always be prevented; that if a small German Prince should obtain the crown, it was to be feared that he would fall into a state of absolute dependence on Vienna or Petersburg; and, finally, that, as there was no prospect of raising a Prussian Prince to that dignity, there was no security for Prussia unless Poland continued to be a free Elective Monarchy.

Every lover of Prussia will regret that this report did not receive the royal sanction, and that Prussia did not openly, in the face of all the world, renounce its treaty with Poland. For the time is past for ever, when men, from general philanthropy, overlooked the incompatibility of Polish power and Prussian existence, and good-humouredly called upon Prussia to strengthen a State whose first efforts would have been directed to the dismemberment of the Prussian Mon-

archy. There was, of course, no idea in Berlin of supporting the act of the 3rd of May; the only question was, as to the best means of protecting Prussian interests, in opposition to the new policy of Poland. And here, no doubt, the open course which Herzberg proposed would have been the most dignified. It was beyond all doubt, that no alliance, and not even a lasting peace, was possible between Prussia and a firmly established Polish monarchy; and the longer the open acknowledgment of this fact was delayed, the greater was the danger to Prussia—when the inevitable rupture came—of bringing upon herself the charge of utter perfidy. But such considerations of a perhaps distant future, were, at that time, thrown into the shade, by the urgent necessities of the moment. The question which at that period controlled the whole policy of Prussia, was the probability of a war with Russia. It was still quite uncertain whether Catharine would be contented with the new offers which had been made her; or whether Prussia might not, in a few weeks, be compelled to strain her energies to the utmost. In such a position, it seemed to the Prussian Statesmen highly dangerous to alienate Poland, and perhaps to drive her into an alliance with Russia. The fact that Austria favoured the Polish movement tended to incline the Government of Berlin to yield. Reports, indeed, arrived from Vienna, that Kaunitz, friendly as usual to Russia, was highly indignant at the Warsaw *coup d'état,* which he every where represented as a Prussian intrigue; and that he began to speak of the danger that Prussia should place one of her own Princes on the Polish throne, by a marriage with the Saxon Infanta. Meanwhile, Lord Elgin, after repeated conversations with the Emperor in Italy, reported that Leopold had proposed a guarantee of the integrity and constitution of Poland, as one of the provisions of the proposed alliance. As the Emperor united this proposal with the offer of his friendship, and consequently his neutrality, in a Russian war—could the Prussian Government repel him too, by a

protest against the Warsaw *coup d'état,* and thereby risk the only benefit of the treaty of Reichenbach? In short it was resolved of two evils to choose the least, and for the sake of isolating Russia to raise no objection to the Polish constitution. On the 8th of May, the King expressed to the Polish ambassador, Jablonowsky, his approbation of what had occurred, and caused the same assurances to be repeated in Warsaw and Dresden. With the same object in view, he ordered his agents in Sistova to conform as far as possible to the wishes of Austria—to make no further mention of the old treaty—and no longer to insist upon a guarantee for the new one; and lastly to drop all claims to Dantzic and Thorn. He had agreed with England to offer the Russians Oczakov and a district between the Dniester and the Bug. The King hoped that after showing so much moderation and readiness to yield on his side, he might reckon on the armed assistance of Poland, and the neutrality at least of Austria, if Russia should drive matters to extremities. For Leopold, before he had seen the Prussian note of the 12th, had given Lord Elgin the most solemn assurance—in the conversations referred to above,—that he would settle with the Turks without further delay. Joseph's alliance with Russia, he said, was a mistake; Austria ought not to allow any farther increase of the Russian power. He lamented that he had not yet received any answer to his friendly overtures from Frederick William; and expressed a wish to see the excellent Colonel Bischoffswerder once more about his person. Lord Elgin did not lose a moment in reporting these promising expressions to Berlin, where they produced a powerful effect upon the mind of the King. On the 25th, Finkenstein and Schulenburg were summoned to a Cabinet council at Charlottenburg. The King declared his belief in Leopold's sincerity, and expressed a wish to send Colonel Bischoffswerder for the second time to Leopold. The Ministers, who still distrusted the Emperor, were not well pleased at this determination, in which however they

found the King immoveably fixed. "The alliance with Austria," said Finkenstein at last, "will hardly come to pass, and it is better that it should not; but the mission of Bischoffswerder may at any rate have the advantage of inducing the Emperor to settle matters more quickly at Sistova." The instructions which were drawn up for the Colonel throw the clearest light upon the Prussian policy at that period. Bischoffswerder was to say, that the King had been prevented from sending an answer to Leopold's offers, solely by the difficulties which Kaunitz had raised in the Turkish negociations; and that as soon as the Emperor had unreservedly concluded peace at Sistova, Prussia was ready to enter into an alliance with Austria. That with regard to the guarantee of Poland in its present extent, and of its free and independent constitution—in which the Emperor took such strong interest—Prussia had no objections to make, and was ready to sanction them by her signature. That as to the fears of the Austrian ministers respecting the further consequences of the Polish revolution, though Prussia had not taken the least part in originating it, she approved of the *fait accompli*, since the choice of the Saxon Elector could not but be pleasant to her. That a marriage of the Infanta with a Prince of any of the three neighbouring Powers must not be thought of; and that the exclusion of such a possibility ought to be emphatically pronounced in a special article of the treaty. That with regard to the alliance itself, the first condition of Prussia was, that Russia should be excluded from it; and that the Emperor should expressly bind himself to remain neutral in case of a Russo-Prussian war. Bischoffswerder was further directed not to close with Leopold without referring to Berlin for special instructions. He was moreover to express to the Emperor the King's readiness to meet him in person, and to propose the Saxon Villa of Pillnitz, near Dresden, as the place of rendezvous. With this view, he was ordered to visit the Elector of Saxony on his way, and to come to an understanding with

him on this point; and further to take the opportunity of inviting the Elector to an immediate acceptance of the Polish proposals. The King hoped, by these means, to bring matters to a clear and rapid settlement in this quarter also, and to exclude the Russian influence as much as possible.

Bischoffswerder started from Berlin on the 28th of May, followed by the best wishes and fairest hopes of his King. But he had scarcely passed the Prussian frontier, when intelligence arrived from Sistova—where the conferences had been reopened on the 19th of May—and from Vienna itself, which formed a striking contrast to the previous assurances of Leopold. In reply to the Prussian note of the 12th, Kaunitz declared that Austria would be very glad to enter into an alliance with Prussia, provided always that Russia was included in it. "We cannot," he said, "separate from Russia; Russia is the only Power which does not grudge us an increase of territory." In a second memorial he discussed the claims which Austria had acquired by the peace of Belgrade, in 1739, to Orsova and a Croatian district on the Unna; and concluded by saying, that the Emperor, according to his promise at Reichenbach demanded nothing of the Turks but the *status quo ante*, by which however he meant the *status* such as it *ought by right* to have been before the war. The Court of Berlin was highly astonished at this new check. They agreed indeed with the Austrian interpretation of the peace of Belgrade, and were ready to support it, in a special negociation on this point, in Constantinople. But they were entirely of opinion that this question had no place at Sistova, and that, according to the treaty of Reichenbach, Austria had simply to restore the *actual status quo ante*. But they were, above all, indignant at the proposal to admit Russia to the alliance—the essential and declared object of which was the limiting and curbing of Russia. All the previous distrust of Leopold awoke with double force. "Who is in the right now?" wrote Manstein to the Ministers. "You allowed yourself to be

deceived by the fair words of the Emperor, and now the most arbitrary demands are brought forward." The Ministers, on their side, sent an urgent warning to Colonel Bischoffswerder, not to allow himself to be befooled by the ambiguous policy of the Austrians. The more moderate clung for a while to the hope that the new difficulties were exclusively the work of Kaunitz, and had been raised by him without the knowledge of the Emperor. But the symptoms grew worse and worse every day. It was reported from St. Petersburg, that Catharine was acquainted with the Austrian claims, that she zealously supported them, and had promised the Emperor not to lay down her arms until he was in possession of Orsova. In Vienna the Privy *Referendarius*, Spielmann, told the Russian Ambassador, that the Turks had better be reasonable, or the two Imperial Courts would most energetically cooperate against them. Lord Elgin wrote from Florence to complain of the cold politeness of the Emperor, who was as eager for the admission of Russia into the impending treaty, as Prince Kaunitz himself. Lastly, the news of an apparently irremediable breach arrived from Sistova. After the Turks had refused the cession of Orsova, Herbert and Esterhazy declared all further negotiation hopeless, and withdrew from the Congress on the 18th June. Recruits and reinforcements hastened from all parts of Hungary to the battalions on the Danube; large bodies of men were drawn together on the Bohemian and Moravian frontiers; in a word, Austria suddenly assumed an attitude as warlike and aggressive, as at any period of Joseph's reign. The Prussian Government were greatly excited and enraged by so sudden a change. They derived some comfort, however, from the receipt of a Russian despatch, which was in the main favourable to the last propositions made by Prussia and England, and dispelled, to a considerable degree, the clouds of war in that direction; and they were all the more resolved to use every means of keeping Austria to her previous engagements. All the Prussian Provinces were

still perfectly prepared for war; and orders were now sent to hold 80,000 men ready to march during the month of July. This force, under the command of Duke Charles William Ferdinand of Brunswick, was destined to overrun Moravia in three columns, and to besiege Olmütz. Prussia found herself all at once in the midst of warlike excitement; the Cabinet, the Capital and the Provinces resounded with the din of war; the King was surprised and vexed, but determined not to yield an inch; when, suddenly, on the 24th, a few hastily written lines arrived in Berlin, which had been already despatched by Bischoffswerder from Milan on the 14th; "God be praised! every thing is cleared up, and all difficulties are at an end; the Emperor's order to come to terms in Sistova, without any limitations, has already been despatched, and a meeting at Pillnitz agreed to.

Since the Polish revolution, in fact, the Emperor's mood was neither so peaceful as Bischoffswerder had once described it, nor so warlike as they now apprehended in Berlin. What he most wished to avoid was the conclusion of a peace with Turkey, as long as nothing was decided concerning the issue of the Russian contest against the Porte. He found himself in a very advantageous position; England had given up all thoughts of war, and Poland, he hoped, had attached herself for a long time to come to the political system of Austria. He was able therefore to await his opportunity, to invent delays, and to make the best use of his advantages; and though, in his heart, he was desirous of peace, he no longer, as in the former year, dreaded war under any circumstances. At one moment, indeed, he had almost made up his mind to a new war with Turkey and Prussia. One of his best cards, as we have seen, was the new and aspiring spirit of Poland, whose constitution of the 3rd of May he had immediately taken under his protection. But he suddenly became apprehensive that these very proceedings in Warsaw might turn out to the advantage, not of Austria, but of his Prussian rival. Both his own and the Russian

Ministers vied with one another in pressing upon him, that Prussia alone had originated and patronized the Polish *coup d'état*, and would receive in return from the grateful Poles, first, the long contested city of Dantzic, and, afterwards, the hand of the Infanta for a Prussian Prince. The thought of such a possibility immediately inclined Leopold again towards Russia, and renewed his warlike feelings. He ordered the claim which we have noticed above, to be made at Sistova, and emphatically proclaimed his friendship for Russia. His eager desire to supplant the Prussian influence in Warsaw led him still further. He proposed to the Russian Government a common recognition of the new hereditary monarchy in Poland; nay, it is highly probable that he added to it a further proposition according to which the Saxon Elector should be succeeded on the Polish throne, not by his daughter—whose marriage with a Prussian was apprehended—but by his brother, who was married to an Austrian princess; by which change the connexion between Saxony and Poland would be rendered perpetual. It is true that, according to this plan, the sacrifices to be made by Russia on the Vistula would be, to a certain extent, increased, while Austria would be a gainer. But if there ever was a moment when such a proposition could obtain a favourable hearing, it was now, when Prussia was coming forward to protect the Turks against Russia, and when the resumption of the war against Turkey by Leopold, would have enabled the Czarina to indemnify herself in Constantinople for the loss of Warsaw. But this whole conjuncture of affairs lasted only for a moment. It became evident at once that Leopold had dreaded the intrigues of Prussia in Poland without reason, and that he had been entirely mistaken as to the sentiments of Russia. Bischoffswerder had meantime arrived at the Imperial Court, and his first conversation with the Emperor was sufficient to dispel all fears of Prussian machinations in Warsaw. In St. Petersburg they chose rather to postpone the conquest of Constantinople,

than to forego the re-conquest of Warsaw. It had evidently been adopted, once for all, as a fundamental principle of Russian policy, not to allow the establishment of an independent Poland. The Austrian overtures were received with friendly composure at the Russian Court, but they only strengthened its determination to conclude a peace with Turkey, on the basis proposed by England; to content themselves with the acquisition of Oczakov, and then as soon as possible to invite the Prussian Court to join in meeting the danger which threatened them both from Poland. And thus the condition on which Leopold had made his treaty with Turkey depend was fulfilled, though not in the manner he had wished; a Russian negociation with the Porte was now commenced side by side with the Austrian; and the Emperor immediately sent orders to Vienna and Sistova to come to a settlement without any further reservation.

The Oriental crisis was hereby ended. The differences between the two German Powers, which so lately seemed likely to break out afresh into open war, were settled; and again Leopold took up the idea of making his Prussian rival subservient to the political schemes of Austria—not by force of arms, but by an alliance. He had the good fortune to make considerable progress towards this object; how well would he have deserved both of Germany and Europe, if he had fairly and openly acknowledged the power of Prussia, and had sought the advancement of Austria in a sincere friendship with his German Confederate! This would have been possible, nay, it would have been easy, in the case of a man like Frederick William, a Prince who was far inferior to the Emperor in acuteness and penetration of mind, and who, perhaps, took more pleasure in generous devotion to a friend, than is consistent with the duty of a sovereign. But, unfortunately, in his overweening ambition, Leopold could not content himself with such a result. To the proposed alliance with Prussia he brought other sentiments than the desire of a sincere and mutual support. With all his

acuteness, he forgot that every unfair advantage taken of an ally is sure to revenge itself on him who gains it, by disturbing and envenoming the alliance itself. We can already point to the very spot, where Leopold introduced the germs of dissolution into the relation in which he placed himself to Prussia. It was the same, at which he had parted company with his former allies—the Russians; the same, where an alliance was already forming at St. Petersburg and Berlin against Vienna; *viz.* the dazzling, but fatal, scheme of a Saxon-Polish hereditary monarch. On this occasion, if ever, *le mieux etait l'ennemi du bon.* The Prussian king was ready to acknowledge the Polish constitution, under any neutral and harmless dynasty; and this addition to the power of Poland might have been maintained against Russia, under the protection of united Germany. But no Prussian Government could lend a hand to the realisation of Leopold's views; and we shall see, only too soon, how completely the very first declaration of them broke up the proposed alliance.

II. PILLNITZ.

No sooner had Bischoffswerder arrived at the Imperial Court, than Leopold found new motives, in the course which French affairs were taking, to congratulate himself on his own peaceful resolutions, and to accelerate his reconciliation with Prussia. During the whole Spring, as we have seen, he had exhorted his Sister to patience and endurance, and endeavoured to restrain her from every rash undertaking. He resolutely kept himself aloof, at the same period, from the exiled Princes, who at that time besieged the German and Italian Courts with their prayers for aid; and who, though they were every where received with the most elaborate courtesy, and in some quarters obtained grants of money, nowhere found the slightest inclination to interfere in the Revolution by force of arms. Spain and Sardinia were liberal in plans, by which *other* Powers were to save

the throne of France; and Naples went so far as to grant some pensions. The King of Prussia declared himself ready to render armed assistance, if Louis XVI. would demand it, and promise to repay the expenses. Leopold gave them the fairest words, but induced Louis to send an order to the Count d'Artois to remain entirely inactive. It was natural that as long as the complicated Eastern question remained unsettled, he should wish for no new crisis in the West; and it was with a heavy heart that he saw his Sister adhering to her plan of flight, which, whether it succeeded or failed, would inevitably bring him into violent collision with the Revolution.

It was under the influence of these feelings that he conferred with Bischoffswerder, at the first audience in Milan. He begged that the Court of Berlin would not be misled by any intelligence of a warlike character from Sistova. He confessed that he had purposely delayed the proceedings there, in order to see whether the parliamentary struggles in England might not throw some small additional advantage in his way; but now, he said, all doubts were over, and he had sent the most positive orders to come to a settlement. "I know," he added, "that Russia has since that time been hostile to me, but I cannot with decency openly break with her, nor can I accept the offer of an English alliance, until peace has been concluded between Russia and Turkey; when this is done, I think we ought first to treat with Prussia, and then England and Russia can, if they please, join our alliance." He invited the Colonel to accompany him to Vienna. He expressed his approbation of the proposal that he should meet the King at Pillnitz, and promised to bring his heir, the Archduke Francis, to the conference, in order to inspire him with friendly feelings towards Prussia. At Pillnitz, he said, they could arrange the Polish question. He likewise expressed his approval of the plan of raising the Elector of Saxony to the Polish throne, and excluding the three neighbouring dynasties from matrimonial alliance

with the Saxon Princess. "Above all," he added in conclusion, "we must discuss the French question; I regard it as a subject of the greatest moment, which renders a mutual understanding between us with respect to all future contingences absolutely necessary."

Two days afterwards, on the 13th of June, he had a second conversation with Bischoffswerder, in which he enlarged, for a full hour, on the dangers which might arise from the French Revolution. "The *Emigrés*," he said, "are wandering from place to place with their foolish fancies, and the Jacobins are stirring up revolts throughout the whole of Italy. It is necessary to root out the evil at once; and we must deliberate on the means of doing this at Pillnitz." On the 18th he gave the Colonel a third audience, went through with him the articles of the treaty between Austria and Prussia, one by one, and at the end of their deliberations declared his definitive assent to it. He then recurred to the French question, but this time in a somewhat altered tone. "The danger," he said, "is great; we must proceed with extreme caution, and allow matters to come to such a pass, that the nation itself will feel the necessity of a change in its condition." He then gave the Colonel a letter for the King, together with a declaration written by the Archduke Francis, in which he expressed his readiness to conclude a treaty with Bischoffswerder,—immediately after his arrival in Vienna—regarding the special interests of Austria and Prussia, and in accordance with the articles already agreed upon. These stipulations were then to serve as a basis upon which to invite the adhesion of England and Holland, as soon as the peace between Russia and Turkey should have been signed. Soon afterwards, he showed the Colonel a sketch of a note on French affairs, in which he set forth the right of interference, grounded on the dangers to which the Royal Family were exposed, and the attempts of the French Revolutionists to excite revolt in neighbouring countries. But, he added, that no single State could produce a

favourable effect; this could only be the result of a general union of all the European Powers. Bischoffswerder entirely agreed with him, and expressed a hope that the King would in all respects share in the opinions of the Emperor.

Such was the intelligence, which, at the end of June, interrupted the warlike preparations at Berlin. The King, who at the bottom of his heart was very averse to a contest with Austria, breathed more freely, though he could not as yet place entire confidence in the assurances of Leopold. Bischoffswerder had brought no particulars of the instructions which the Emperor had sent to Sistova, and the Court of Berlin judged it prudent not to lay aside their arms, until Leopold had actually signed the peace with Turkey. "They are fine words," wrote Manstein, "but the King says that they are no longer of any avail; that he must see acts." It is true that Count Herzberg received on the 5th July his definitive dismissal; but at the same time a messenger was despatched by the Cabinet to the Duke of Brunswick to offer him the command-in-chief in case of a war with Austria. However, these cares were soon dispelled; the contracting parties at Sistova came to an agreement, that the cession of Orsova should not be mentioned in the treaty of peace, but should be imposed on the Turks by the mediating Powers in a special negociation.

By the middle of July, no doubt remained that a general understanding would be come to on the Eastern question. The French Revolution, consequently, was now brought more prominently into the foreground of all the deliberations at Berlin. In the previous June, a confidant of the Count d'Artois, Baron Roll, had arrived at the Prussian Court, and brought with him an assurance from the Prince (which was by the way untrue) that Louis XVI. had, through the medium of of Count Durfort, asked military aid of Prussia, and had promised an indemnification for all expenses. The King replied evasively, that he could not possibly make any promise before the conclusion of the peace with Turkey.

The Ministers were thoroughly convinced that nothing could be more injurious to Prussia than a war against the French; which could have no other effect than to strengthen Austria—in whom but little confidence could be placed,—and offend England. Alvensleben, who was the most decided of all in his aversion to the Emperor, saw with concern a warmer feeling of compassion in the King's mind for Louis XVI., than was consistent with the interests of Prussia. He was not altogether mistaken in his suspicions, but distrust of the Emperor still divided the heart of Frederick William with pity for the Royal Family. "The French question," wrote the King at this time to Bischoffswerder, "causes me much anxiety; I wish that you could unravel the mystery, and give me a clue to the policy of the Emperor, which even now we find it difficult to regard as altogether straightforward." He feared that the object of Leopold, in speaking of France, was to implicate Prussia in a dangerous undertaking, that he might himself have free scope in Germany and Eastern Europe.

Meanwhile Leopold, after a false report of Louis's happy escape, had received intelligence of the failure of his attempted flight, and the desperate condition of his relatives. Deeply concerned as he was, he still adhered to his previous opinion, that united Europe alone could successfully oppose the Revolution; and he therefore issued a circular from Padua, on the 6th July, to all Sovereigns, inviting them to take up in common the cause of Louis XVI. At the same time, a manifesto was prepared to the French National Assembly. This document, however, only spoke of the personal safety of the Royal Family; and since it appeared that their lives were not immediately threatened, even this was not despatched. The Emperor then loudly proclaimed his intention of placing his whole army on a war footing, but his real orders were limited to a few battalions. The Prussian Ministers, therefore, were of opinion, that Leopold would talk big but do little, and perhaps make a catspaw of the Ger-

man Empire; and they informed their ambassador at Vienna, that they had determined to hold back and await the proposals of the Emperor. Leopold, on the other hand, used his utmost endeavours to gain over Colonel Bischoffswerder; and, owing to the disposition of the Minister, his efforts were speedily crowned with complete success. The Colonel had the proud consciousness of exercising the greatest influence over the Emperor and his confidants, and he became every day more eager to conclude an alliance between Austria and Prussia as quickly as possible—an alliance fraught with such mighty consequences. He frequently received warnings from Berlin to be on his guard against so wary a calculator as Leopold; to which he replied, that he was well aware of the hostility of Prince Kaunitz, but could depend upon his friends in the Imperial Cabinet. These warnings had at last this effect, that he refused to go into the details of the French question, and declared that he was only empowered to discuss the alliance between Austria and Prussia, which Leopold, on his part was secretly determined not to condude without the introduction of a clause respecting France. The Emperor made such good use of his freer intercourse with Bischoffswerder, during their journeyto Vienna, that he induced him, on the 25th of July, five days after their arrival in that city, to sign a preliminary treaty, in spite of the express instructions which the Colonel had received, not to affix his signature to any agreement, without a second reference to Berlin, nor before the completion of peace with Turkey. The purport of these preliminaries, as well as the rapidity of the whole proceeding, testified to the superiority of the Imperial negociator. The contracting parties commenced by mutually guaranteeing their present possessions, which was a decided concession on the part of Prussia in regard to Belgium, since the King thereby gave up his protest against the unwarranted limitation of the national privileges of that country. Then came a promise not to enter into any further alliance with a third Power, without

each other's knowledge; a proviso, which, in the existing state of affairs, could only be advantageous to Austria; since it prevented a one-sided understanding between Prussia and Russia. The two Powers further agreed, not to undertake any thing against the territorial *status* or constitution of Poland; and not to marry the Saxon Princess to any member of their respective Houses. After what we have observed above, there needs no further proof that Prussia thereby assented to all the wishes of Austria, with which it was acquainted, while Leopold kept his hands entirely free to carry out his real plan, and meanwhile took great credit to himself for the disinterestedness with which he declined the suit of several Polish magnates, who asked the hand of an Archdukef or the Princess of Saxony. It was, again, an advantage to Austria, and a burden to Prussia, that the two Powers promised mutual assistance in the event of any internal disturbance in their respective States. Prussia had nothing to fear, in this respect, from the temper of its provinces; while Hungary and Belgium still trembled beneath the shock which they had received in the reign of Joseph. By the fourth and last article of the treaty, the two Courts engaged to lose no time in promoting a concert of the European Powers, with respect to French affairs—to the consideration of which the Emperor had already invited them. Leopold had every reason to be satisfied with the results he had obtained. He had sacrificed nothing to the new alliance, and had nevertheless secured his own position on every side. As regarded France, he was just as little inclined as the Prussian Ministers to aggressive proceedings against the Revolution; but the preliminaries, at any rate, prepared the way to procure the co-operation of Prussia in case of need.

On the 27th of July, Prince Reuss presented a memorial to the Court of Berlin, in which the Emperor explained at length his views of a European Concert. It was drawn up, throughout, in Leopold's usual cautious and circumspect

manner. After grounding the right of intervention on the infectious nature of the revolutionary malady, it proposed, in the first place, a joint manifesto of the Powers to the French National Assembly, in which that body should be called upon to pause in its headlong and destructive course. If this step remained fruitless, the Powers were to break off all commerce and intercourse with France, open a congress in Aix-la-Chapelle or Spa, and then deliberate on further measures. There too—in case an armed intervention should appear necessary—they would take into consideration the future constitution of France; but in doing so they were to renounce, in honour of the great cause in which they were engaged, all views of selfish aggrandizement. We see what a small part the desire for war played in the drawing up of this far-seeing plan. The document repeatedly urged that no step ought to be taken without the concurrence of all the Powers, and especially of England; and as England's decided aversion to every kind of interference was well known, this stipulation alone was sufficient to stamp upon the whole scheme, the character of a harmless demonstration.

The Prussian Ministers were still of opinion that in the treatment of so critical a subject, they must observe the greatest prudence and prepare themselves for every contingency. Their own minds had long been made up, and they therefore despatched, as early as the 28th, a full and circumstantial answer to Vienna. The King, they said, was ready, as soon as the peace with Turkey should be definitively concluded, to take an active part in the measures which the United Powers might determine upon. The first of these measures, they continued, would be, of course, the proposed manifesto; but they urged that if this was to produce any effect, it must be supported by adequate warlike preparations; and in case of a refusal, the Powers must make up their minds to a war, and agree upon the mode in which it was to be conducted. Nothing, in their opinion, was worse than haughty language, unsupported by deeds. They intimated

that their King was not so well satisfied with the proposal of holding a Congress in Aix-la-Chapelle, and breaking off commercial intercourse with France, from which he anticipated no advantage, but considerable inconvenience. With respect to a constitution for France, it would be difficult to come to an agreement; the King, for his part, would desire to see the Monarchy invested with adequate powers, but conformed as far as possible to the constitution to which the people themselves had accorded their approbation. The cooperation of England they allowed was undoubtedly necessary, but the participation of the German Empire appeared to them open to many objections. Finally, they declared that the King was ready to subscribe to the clause against selfish aggrandizement.

Thus far the despatch was intended for communication to the Austrian Cabinet; but for the private instruction of the Ambassador, the Ministers went on to say, that this renunciation of all prospect of private advantage would hold good, if the Powers succeeded in completely restoring the government of Louis XVI. But how would it be, they asked, if the war should terminate otherwise?—if the attempt at restoration failed, but Alsace and Lorraine, for example, were conquered by their arms? What motive would there be for giving them back again?—and if they were not restored, to whom should they fall?—was Austria to keep them?—and what corresponding acquisition was Prussia in that case to make? From these questions, they said, an entire rupture of the League might arise; and it was therefore indispensably necessary to elucidate them before the beginning of the war. "We have no wish," they added in conclusion, "to enter into this war at all; we were obliged, however, to give a full answer to the Imperial Note; but we adhere once for all to our system of passive waiting."

The future was to show, after not many years, how well-founded all these apprehensions were; and Leopold himself fully recognized their weight. He regarded the Prussian

answer as a virtual refusal, and it confirmed his wish to avoid, if possible, a breach with France. We have seen the course which matters were taking in Paris at this moment, —how the National Assembly began to take the side of the King, and how Lafayette put down the democrats. Leopold resolved, if any tolerable arrangement could be made in Paris itself, to hinder all foreign intervention, from which he already anticipated no other result than endless complications in Europe, and an infinite exasperation and acceleration of the Revolution. He suddenly began to show extreme coldness to the French *Emigrés;* he exhorted the Royal family, and the political chiefs in Paris, to mutual forbearance; and publicly displayed his own sentiments in acts, by placing his army on a footing of peace, and dismissing nearly half his soldiers from active service. All that he saw around him, at that time, on the political horizon contributed to confirm him in this attitude. While Prussia, in the very act of giving an apparent assent to the Austrian note of the 27th, had exposed its practical infeasibility, an extremely concise declaration had arrived from London, to the effect that England would observe the strictest neutrality in case of any breach between Austria and France. It was even believed at Vienna that the Pitt ministry regarded the National Assembly with decided predilection. It was reported that Louis XVI. had vainly offered to England considerable commercial advantages, if it would join Leopold against the Revolution; and it was supposed that Pitt, remembering the support which Louis had given to the American Revolution, regarded the helplessness of the Bourbon monarchy with pleasure, and was determined in no case to expose the Netherlands to the danger of a French war. And thus the strongest link in the chain of the European coalition—the firmness and completeness of which Leopold had laid down as the indispensable condition of a successful struggle against the Revolution—broke at the very first touch.

The mind of the Emperor was still more strongly influenced,

at this time, by a fresh change in the policy of the greatest of Continental Powers in regard to another portion of his system. The negociations for peace in the East had just been brought to the long-desired conclusion. A definitive treaty was signed by Austria at Sistova on the 5th, and the preliminaries of another by Russia at Galacz on the 11th of August. These acts no doubt were in so far advantageous to the Austrian Court, that they induced the Berlin Government to ratify, without further delay, the compact lately entered into by Bischoffswerder; but, on the other hand, another greatly dreaded danger arose from the new state of things; inasmuch as Catharine, freed from the trammels of the Turkish war, took up the Polish question with the greatest energy. She had now no feeling towards the efforts of Poland but hatred and contempt. She regarded Stanislaus as a perjured traitor, and declared her conviction that the Poles themselves would soon destroy their own work. And in fact the affairs of the Republic presented a most melancholy appearance. As early as July, Stanislaus remarked of Lithuania that it manifested an universal apathy; the embers of revolt still glowed in the Ukraine, and the Chiefs of the Russian party, Felix Potocki and Branicki, were at that time about to visit Prince Potemkin in Jassy. A phenomenon, still more fatal than this opposition, was the idleness and incapacity of the new Government itself. For three years all the Polish patriots had been incessantly declaiming on the necessity, which was evident to all, of raising the army to 100,000 men. They now had the helm of government in their own hands, and yet, after three months' work, they found themselves in possession of a badly trained, and miserably provided, force of only 20,000 men. In answer to complaints which were made on this subject in the Diet, it was said that the military commission could not work because the necessary *quorum* of seven members could never be brought together at the same time. And what seems almost incredible, the only remedy suggested

for this evil was to reduce the number to five. Under such circumstances, Poland must inevitably become either the booty or the tool of its most powerful neighbour; and Catharine had no intention of acknowledging a superior. Her Ambassadors every where proclaimed her sentiments with the most unreserved frankness. Catharine's Representative at Dresden warned the Elector not to bring down the wrath of Russia on his head by accepting the crown of Poland. In Vienna, Prince Gallizin told Kaunitz that each of the Imperial Courts had to carry out a counter-revolution—the one in Paris, the other in Warsaw. Catharine knew how greatly the views of Leopold were at variance with her own; and her greatest desire was, to implicate the Emperor as inextricably as possibly in the French quarrel, in order to deprive Poland of its most powerful protector; she therefore entered with the greatest zeal into the negociations for the support of Louis XVI. Her old opponent, the brilliant King Gustavus of Sweden, declared his readiness—on receipt of a large subsidy from Russia—to conduct a Swedish army by sea to the coast of Flanders, and thence, under the guidance of Bouillé, against Paris. Catharine, in concert with Gustavus, then entered into a compact with the French Princes, who were regarded as forming the only legitimate government of France, and to whom a Russian Ambassador, Count Romanzow, was accredited. King Gustavus then importuned the Emperor to set to work in good earnest, and to place himself at the head of the League. But, of course, every word he uttered was only an additional warning to Leopold to keep the peace. He had just obtained from Prussia the recognition of Poland, which country would be inevitably overpowered as soon as Austria was occupied by a war with France. He considered that Russia and Sweden ran very little danger by a French campaign; while he should have to risk the immediate loss of his Belgian Provinces, which he had recovered with so much difficulty. And, lastly, he sympathized in his sister's fears respecting the *Emigrés*, who were now

basking in the favour of the Courts which were eager for war. In short, he was more than ever convinced of the necessity of peace, and with these views he prepared to make the best use of his approaching conference with the King of Prussia.

Under these circumstances, he was most disagreeably surprised on the 20th of August, a few days before his departure for Pillnitz, by the sudden and entirely unannounced and unexpected arrival in Vienna of the Count d'Artois. It was not possible to refuse to see him, but Leopold made no secret to him of the real position of affairs. D'Artois eagerly reminded him of the prospects which the Emperor, when in Italy, had held out, at the time of Louis' flight; whereupon Leopold pointed out the obstacles arising from the political state of Europe; and finding that he could make no impression on d'Artois, he declared without any kind of reserve, that he formally withdrew his previous promises. The French Prince was violently excited, but produced not the slightest effect on the minds of the Emperor. He then offered to cede Lorraine, but Leopold remained unmoved. He asked permission to accompany the Emperor to Pillnitz, which the latter, with cool politeness, said that he had no scruple in granting, but that even there no change of policy would take place. A few days afterwards, Kaunitz told the Prussian Ambassador that Naples and Sardinia were certainly ready to go to war with France; that Spain would give fair words but hardly anything more, and that, moreover, the neutrality of England was sufficient to settle the whole matter. "For," he added "unless all the Powers of Europe cooperate, no result can be attained in France; I think I know tolerably well the means of restoring order in a State, but the affairs of France are in a condition of utter and hopeless confusion: I have said this to the Count d'Artois and his friends in the plainest words, and I only hope that the Emperor will not be carried away at Pillnitz by his generosity, to take some im-

prudent step. If Louis XVI. can come to an agreement with the National Assembly about the constitution, there must be no war."

Filled with such sentiments, the Emperor Leopold set out for the conference with his new ally; and the King of Prussia came to meet him with entirely accordant views. The latter felt, perhaps, a warmer compassion for the sufferings of the fallen dynasty of France than Leopold, but the position of his territory, and the experience of the few last years, were such as to give him still less inducement than Austria had, to make war against the Revolution; and he wished with all his heart to hit upon some expedient compatible with the continuance of peace. The representations of d'Artois, therefore, made just as little impression at Pillnitz, as they had done, a week before, at Vienna. In fact, his propositions were of such a nature as to repel every sensible man, and to fill the friends of Louis XVI. with indignation. He laid a document before the two Monarchs consisting of ten articles, which unfolded a grand scheme of inexorable war. Every thing, it said, must be done to strengthen the confidence of Louis, and to intimidate his oppressors. With this view the Brothers of the King, and all the other Princes of the House of Bourbon, were to issue a manifesto, in which they pointed out the late encroachments of the National Assembly, declared all its acts as null and void, and protested against the Royal sanction as obtained by force or fraud. It went on to say, that as France could no longer be left without a government, Monsieur, the Count of Provence, the King's Brother, ought to come forward as Regent, in virtue of his birthright, announce to the nation the cooperation of Austria, Spain, Naples, Prussia, Sardinia, Sweden, Switzerland and, as was to be hoped, Russia, and to make the inhabitants of Paris responsible, on pain of death, for the safety of the Royal family. The Emperor was to signify his acknowledgement of the regency of Monsieur, by laying before him the com-

plaints of the German Princes of the Empire, whose interests had been violated in Alsace. He was likewise to march troops, in conjunction with Prussia and Sardinia, to the French frontier—to allow the Emigrés to arm themselves in his territory—and to guarantee the payment of the sum agreed upon to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, who was willing to lend his troops to the French Princes. Monsieur, it was said, intended, on his part, to negotiate a loan of twelve million francs, immediately after the publication of the manifesto. When the Emperor heard these proposals, he was moved with secret indignation; they appeared to him the offspring of the blindest selfishness and vanity. King Louis—in whose deliverance the Powers were deeply interested, on both personal and political grounds—was, according to this scheme, completely put aside—stripped of his royal dignity, and irrevocably set at variance with his people. France was condemned to see the *ancien régime* restored, and Europe to make infinite exertions, that Monsieur and the *Emigrés* might regain their former privileges and enjoyments. On this point he very soon came to an understanding with the King; and they both resolved to give a suitable answer to the importunate demands of the *Emigrés*, and to assert in opposition to them the general views of European policy. On the 27th, d'Artois received the joint answer of the two Sovereigns, the tone and purport of which clearly testified to the sentiments of its authors. They said that Louis XVI. was well aware of the plan for a European Coalition in his favour, and that this would suffice to steel his courage; while the elevation of Monsieur to the Regency would have a directly opposite effect; that therefore the proposed manifesto of the Bourbon Princes must on no account be made known before the formation of the European League, nor ought any isolated movement of troops to take place. They added, that the rights of the injured Princes of the Empire would be maintained, in accordance with the Imperial Constitution, by the Emperor himself, and that the

Regency of Monsieur was not necessary for that purpose; that the Elector of Hesse Cassel could only be called upon to fulfil his Constitutional engagments. Lastly, the Emperor and King gave their sanction to the peaceable residence of individual *Emigrés* in their States, but declared that no armed preparations would be allowed before the conclusion of an agreement between the European Powers. To this rejection the two Monarchs added a Proposal of their own —contained in a joint declaration—in which they spoke of the restoration of order and monarchy in France as a question of the greatest importance to the whole of Europe. They signified their intention of inviting the cooperation of all the European Powers, and promised, should their application prove successful, "then and in that case"—*alors et dans ce cas*—an active intervention on their own part. But as it was well ascertained that England would take no part, the expressions they chose were really equivalent to a declaration of non-intervention, and were evidently made use of by Leopold solely to intimidate the Parisian democrats. On the very same evening, he wrote to Kaunitz at Vienna, that he might he quite easy in his mind, for that he, Leopold, had only spoken generally, and had avoided all binding engagements. "*Alors et dans ce cas,*" he said, "is with me the law and the prophets—if England fails us, the case I have put is non-existent."

Thus ended the conference of Pillnitz, after the two Monarchs had agreed to protect the constitution of the Empire, to encourage the Elector of Saxony to accept the crown of Poland, and to afford each other friendly aid in every quarter. The statement, therefore, which has been a thousand times repeated, that the first coalition for an attack on the French Revolution was formed on this occasion, has been shown to be utterly without foundation. As soon as the faintest gleam of a reconciliation between Louis and the National Assembly appeared, the cause of the *Emigrés* was abandoned by the German Courts. From the very first, it was nothing

but the personal distresses of the Royal Family which roused Leopold to action. It seemed to him an act of folly to imperil his own nearer interests on the Danube and the Vistula, for the sake of a French constitutional question; but he thought himself bound by duty and affection, not to allow the life and honour of his kindred to perish without help. His armies, therefore, would have marched, if Louis had succeeded in escaping, and he would have been obliged to wage war against the Parisian Democrats. But, on the contrary, he resolved on peace, now that war was attended by infinite difficulties, and could only have the effect of increasing the dangers of the French Royal Family. We overlook, in these considerations, the decisive importance to the whole of Europe, of the moment in which the new Constitution of the 14th of September was laid before Louis XVI. for his acceptance. The choice officially offered to him was this; by accepting the constitution he would once more enter into his constitutional prerogatives, while his refusal would be considered tantamount to an abdication of the throne. If he decided on the latter, it was virtually certain that he would not recover his freedom; and in all probability there would be a wild outbreak of popular fury. In this case, it is not easy to see how the Emperor could have preserved peace. It was in accordance with this state of things, that all the memorials which came from the Austrian party urgently recommended acceptance. The leaders in the National Assembly worked, of course, in the same direction. The predominant opinion, in fact, was in favour of acquiescence in the popular wish; and, as far as we know, the emigrant Princes, Burke and Maury alone sent contrary advice to the Tuileries. What probably decided the question, was that Marie Antoinette without doubt regarded the acceptance of the Constitution as inevitable. It is true that she was as fully convinced as the staunchest Royalists, that the Constitution was odious and untenable. But she saw no means of deliverance within the limits of France. She had no more

liking now than before to foreign war, or the dismemberment of France by foreign armies.[1] But she hoped that the energetic representations of the Emperor, backed by imposing preparations for war, and by the concurrence of the other Powers, would cool down and intimidate the French parties. Everything therefore in her opinion depended on gaining time, on appeasing the Revolutionists by accepting the Constitution, and then endeavouring to restore the royal authority. "Let us have no civil war,"[2] she wrote to Leopold, "no invasion of the *Emigrés*, and, if possible, no foreign war." She recommended, however, that advantage should be taken of the international consequences of the Revolution, and that all the Powers should combine in distinctly demanding, that the King should receive back the authority necessary to the government of France, and the safety of Europe; that France should reduce her force of 4 million National Guards to the standard of other European armies, and conscientiously respect her former treaties with her neighbours. "It is possible," she said, "that if these points, and these alone, are brought forward as the conditions of

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[1] Count Mercy, it is true, was of opinion (vid. Letter to the Queen, March 7th 1791) "que les grandes puissances ne font rien pour rien". But he always excepts the principal person, the Emperor, from this general rule, and regards him as entirely disinterested. He only wished that Louis XVI should endeavour to gain over the Spanish and Sardinian Governments by an insignificant rectification of the borders of Savoy and Navarre. He does not reckon England and Prussia to the Coalition to be formed, but regards them as enemies. Marie Antoinette herself (Letter to Mercy Febr. 3rd 1791, from the Vienna Archives in Feuillet I. 449) hopes that Austria, Prussia, Spain, Sweden and Denmark might be induced to form an alliance with Louis XVI. by the consideration "qu'il peut être de l'intérêt de plusieurs puissances (Prussia, Holland and England) d'abaisser la France et de diminuer son influence, mais que sa ruine totale, ou son démembrement, ne peut jamais entrer dans le système politique de l'Europe." [2] Memorial annexed to the letter of Sept. 8th 1791 in the Vienna Archives, published in the *Revue rétrospective*, II. 7. Hunolstein 257. Feuillet II. 289.

peace with the rest of Europe, a general reaction may take place in the feeling of the people."

On the 16th of September, therefore, Louis declared his acceptance of the constitution, which caused great rejoicing among the population of Paris; and the National Assembly did their part, by proclaiming an unconditional amnesty for all political offences. A few weeks afterwards the King once more explained his motives in a confidential letter to his two Brothers; and at the same time exhorted them to abstain from all protests, which would only exasperate the people. He said that violent measures could only lead to horrors of every kind; that a King could never introduce an army of foreigners into his kingdom; that even in the event of their success, they could not always remain in the provinces they had desolated. "It has been said," he continued, "that a King always seeks to recover his lost power; but I cannot, on that account, enter on a course which would lead to the ruin of my people, and expose me to the reproaches of my own conscience. I therefore unite with the people in giving the constitution a trial. But the people are changed in all their views; the lower classes long for license, and the higher for equality; the former find themselves regarded with respect, and the latter see nothing superior to themselves. In the pleasure derived from this proud selfconsciousness all other considerations are lost sight of. Every man finds fault with some particular provision of the constitution, and yet hopes that its completion will produce a state of perfect happiness. Every attempt to overthrow it would, I am convinced, rouse a storm of which no one could see the end. The people must be allowed to put it to the proof, and then they will soon discover that they have been deceived. I am prepared, therefore, to drag on a wretched existence, and I call on you to support my plans by entire resignation on your part: you have indeed sufficient reason to be angry, you have suffered much, but have I passed joyous days?"

The Emperor Leopold heartily concurred in these views. He approved of the acceptance of the constitution *per se*, which at the same time afforded him the prospect of deliverance from a most painful diplomatic position. No sooner had he received the news from Paris, than he announced to the Powers that the necessity of a European Coalition was for the present obviated. On the 1st of November, he issued a circular to the same effect; that as Louis XVI. had declared his willingness to accept his new position, and had thereby recovered his freedom and his power, nothing was left for the rest of Europe but to watch the further development of affairs in France. The King of Prussia, although at that time more favourably inclined toward the *Emigrés* than at Pillnitz, would not move without the Emperor. Spain and the Italian States, in spite of their wrath against the Revolution, thanked heaven for the preservation of peace. As Sweden and Russia were compelled by the lateness of the season to postpone their naval preparations to the following spring, every appearance of a Coalition now vanished away, and the peace of Europe seemed secured for a long while to come.

The *Emigrés* alone persisted in their previous course, and despatched protests to all the journals; declaring that, Louis, being in a state of captivity, was incapable of issuing any valid decrees. In the interior of France, the religious feud was spreading more and more widely over the land, and the persecution of the non-juring Priests on the one side, and the fanaticism of the catholic peasants on the other, were constantly increasing in violence and bitterness. The Jacobins observed the growing madness of both parties with equal pleasure. They prepared, with ill-concealed joy, to make use of the destructive materials which lay ready to their hands, for the overthrow of the throne, the subversion of society, and the kindling of the flames of war and revolution, throughout the whole of Europe.

BOOK III.

ABOLITION OF ROYALTY IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

WEAKNESS OF THE RIGHT IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.—THE GIRONDISTS AIM AT THE OVERTHROW OF THE CONSTITUTION AND AT WAR.—AUSTRIA STILL INCLINED TO PEACE.—PENAL DECREES AGAINST PRIESTS AND EMIGRÉS.—LAFAYETTE DECIDES IN FAVOUR OF WAR.—HIS FRIEND NARBONNE BECOMES MINISTER-AT-WAR.—MILITARY PREPARATIONS.—EMBASSY TO PRUSSIA AND ENGLAND.—ROBESPIERRE AGAINST WAR.—AUSTRIAN NOTE IN FAVOUR OF PEACE.—THE DECREE OF JAN. 25 IS DECISIVE IN FAVOUR OF WAR.

In the new National Assembly there was only one powerful and active party—that of the Gironde.

The Assembly had virtually been elected by universal suffrage, and the influence of the Jacobin Club had not been in any degree counteracted by the influence of property. We observe, moreover, a phenomenon, the effect of which can hardly be rated too highly from this time forward in all the events of the Revolutionary period—*viz.* a deep and universal feeling of exhaustion and apathy on the part of the middle classes. The out-burst which followed the attempted flight of the King was the last pulsation of the enthusiasm with which the nation had, in the summer of 1789, greeted the dawn of a new era. The great mass of the people were, in spite of all drawbacks, sufficiently contented with what had been already achieved; but they were all the more eager for the final completion of the work; and when this seemed to be offered to them by the acceptance of the Constitution, they hastened to the peaceful enjoyment of their new acquisitions. Every man returned to his private business, and rejoiced to be released,—as he thought, for a

long time to come—from the heavy burden of politics.[1] Nearly all the elections which took place from this time forward were made by a minority of the voters, and this was more especially the case in Paris, where it was considered a great thing, if a quarter of the enfranchised citizens came forward to give their votes.

It is a striking proof, therefore, of the actual weakness of the democratic party, that even under these circumstances, their candidates were left in a decided minority, at the elections. But their defeat was more than made up to them by the character of the victors. As the men of the *ancien régime* were excluded by the very position of affairs, the members of the Constituent Assembly by Robespierre's law, and the majority of the educated class by their own satiety of politics—the main body of the Assembly was composed of a crowd of people, without any views of their own, without experience, and entirely incapable of the task before them. They had a laudable desire to preserve their newly acquired liberties, but not the slightest power of comprehending the danger by which those liberties were actually threatened. They wished for Monarchy and Order, but they would have regarded every measure which tended towards the preservation of these blessings as reactionary and oppressive. Their cry was "the Constitution, the whole Constitution, and nothing but the Constitution;" but they had no presentiment that for the preservation of that which they comprehended in these words, a radical reform of the constitution itself was indispensably necessary. They were, in short, an inferior edition of Lameth's party in 1790, and met

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[1] Mad. Roland speaking of this period makes the following complaint; "It is incredible how many of the officials, and merchants are reactionary in their politics; the people are wearied out, and imagine that every thing has been done; and are returning to their daily labour. All the democratic newspapers are enraged at the cheers with which the King is received whenever he appears."

with exactly the same fate. Having begun by lending their aid in every direction to the work of destruction, they saw their error when it was too late, and were obliged at last, unwillingly, to allow the evil work to be carried on, which they themselves, in their thoughtlessness and inexperience, had set on foot.

When we use the term *parties* in reference to this Assembly, nothing more is meant by it than small groups of from twelve to twenty persons, who bore the sway in the rostra and in the Committees, and who alternately carried with them the aimless crowd of Deputies. It is true, indeed, that at the commencement of their session, one hundred and thirty Deputies entered their names among the Jacobins, and about two hundred among the Feuillants, but this had no lasting influence on the divisions, and the majority wavered under the influence of temporary motives. The party which was regarded as the "Right," had no opportunity for action, but saw themselves, from the very first, obliged to assume an attitude of defence. The old leaders of the Constituent Assembly, Barnave, Lameth, Duport, were still indeed silently at work, partly in the closets of the Ministers, and partly in the Club of Feuillants, and striving to give greater solidity to the existing state of things, by introducing the system of two Chambers. But they could by no means agree upon the mode in which their common object was to be obtained; they were at variance as to the respective merits of an hereditary Peerage, and an elective Senate; and all the less on that very account did they venture to come before the Assembly with any definite proposition. Outside the Chamber the *beau ideal* of this party,—General Lafayette—declared himself in favour of an American Senate, but without any of the energy of real conviction. As he had defended the Monarchy solely from a sense of duty, while all the feelings of his heart were inclined towards a Republic, so now, though he acknowledged the necessity of an upper Chamber, the existing constitution appeared to him to possess a more ideal beauty

He never attained, on this point, either to clear ideas or decided actions; and it was at this period that he resigned his command of the National guard in Paris, and retired for a while to his estate in Auvergne. The system of two chambers was thus, from the very first, an empty phantom, and only served the Democrats as a useful pretext for anger and suspicion, which they used with such effect to excite the lower classes, that the Club of the Feuillants was broken up in the course of a few weeks by the riotous excesses of the Parisian mob.

While therefore the one side could with difficulty be roused to a feeble defence of their position, the extreme party, or Left, was animated by the strongest desire to assume the offensive. The Girondist Deputies, Vergniaud, Ducos, Guadet and Gensonné, were distinguished among the new members of the Assembly by personal dignity, regular education, and natural ability; and were, moreover, as ardent in their radicalism as any Parisian demagogue. They consequently soon became the darlings of all those zealous patriots for whom the Cordéliers were too dirty and the Feuillants too lukewarm. External advantages are not without their weight, even in the most terrible political crises, and the Girondists owe to the magic of their eloquence, and especially to that of Vergniaud, an enduring fame, which neither their principles nor their deeds would have earned for them; for in all other respects they had simply run the demagogues' course, without any peculiar distinction. In opposition they had assailed the Government with all the weapons of anarchy, and only became conservative when they had themselves to assume the reins of power. In the first half of their career, we look in vain for any essential difference between them and the Cordéliers. In every effort to further the license of individuals, the violence of the masses, the disregard of established laws and the rights of property, the emancipation of the flesh from moral restraint, and the degradation of religion—the Girondists are seen acting in concert with Robespierre

and Marat, even after personal ambition had given rise to the bitterest enmity between themselves and those notorious demagogues. And they continued in this course, until the dagger which they had themselves directed against royalty was aimed at themselves. Then indeed they underwent a sudden metamorphosis; they fought for Order, Law and Property; and fell, partly because they moved but awkwardly in a sphere so strange to them, and partly, because they had themselves assisted to tear down the dams which checked the tide of anarchy. Their misfortune therefore did not lie, as is often maintained, in their fickle desertion of the cause of mob rule, but in their incapacity to carry out their change of policy to its full extent. They succumbed—not to the logical strength of their opponents—but to the moral consequences of their own wrong-doing, in which they were irrecoverably entangled.

The representatives of Bordeaux had never occupied a leading position in the Girondist party, to which they had given its name. The real leadership of the Gironde fell singularly enough into the hands of an obscure writer, a political lady, and a priest who carried on his operations behind the scenes. It was their hands that overthrew the throne of the Capets, and spread revolution over Europe. Not one of them was possessed of creative genius or a powerful character;[1] but they all had a lively zeal for destruction, and this was sufficient to throw down the rotten pillars of the new constitution.

The writer in this trio was Brissot, who on the 16th of July had wished to proclaim the Republic, and who now represented the capital in the National Assembly, as a constitutional member. The world lay open to his restless

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[1] When speaking generally of the capacity of the statesmen of those times, Mad. Roland herself says, I. 332: "*La chose qui m'ait le plus surprise... c'est l'universelle médiocrité; elle passe tout ce que l'imagination peut se présenter et cela dans tous les degrès.*"

ambition, and he contemplated the execution of a work very different from that of the weaklings of the Constituent Assembly. These last had, indeed, remodelled France in accordance with their principles, but he, for some months past, had learned to look on the Revolution as a preeminently European question, and hoped to exercise his talent and his influence in a world-wide sphere. The precise direction which his efforts were to take was hardly yet determined on, nor was he at all the man obstinately to hamper himself by far-reaching plans; but in one respect he was always consistent with himself—*viz.* in the desire of spreading disturbance and confusion on all sides. He agitated France in favour of a Republic, and carried on intrigues in the neighbouring countries;[1] and it was he who first uttered the fatal words, that France would need a foreign war to complete her revolution. This war which was to overthrow the throne of Louis XVI., unhinge the whole social system of France, and change the face of Europe, was brought on by no other influence than that of Brissot and his party, and no one therefore has a greater share than he has, in the responsibility for the horrors of 1793. He threw himself into the tide which set towards war with heedless audacity. No doubt he had a certain ideal enthusiasm for the emancipation of the world, and for republican institutions; but the chief motive which impelled him was the restlessness of his own character, which delighted in turmoil and fiery excitement, and, careless of future dangers, trusted to that Fortune which favours the skilful and the bold. While Brissot shaped the foreign policy of the Girondist party, its home affairs were directed by Marie Jeanne[2] Roland, wife of the quondam Inspector of Factories at Lyons, with whom she had come the year

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[1] "Both individuals and associations," says the report of Montmorin to the Nat. Ass. 31. Oct., "have endeavoured to excite disturbances among neighbouring nations." — [2] She calls herself thus in her last trial. Before her marriage she called herself Marion. The latest and complete edition of

before to Paris, and immediately thrown herself into the whirlpool of political life. As early as the year 1789, she had written to a friend, that the National Assembly must demand two illustrious heads, or all would be lost.[1] And after the flight of the King, she took an active part with Brissot and Robespierre in the agitation which ended so miserably in the *émeute* of the Champ de Mars. She was at that time 36 years old, not beautiful but interesting, enthusiastic and indefatigable; with noble aims, but incapable of discerning the narrow line which separates right from wrong. With all her talents she could not escape the common fate of political women; she too forfeited the feminine sense of the beautiful, and the warmth of human affections. She was at this time the enthusiastic advocate of a Republic on the antique model—such as her early studies had presented it to her fancy;—she dreamed of Spartan severity, Roman virtue, and Plutarch's heroes; with all which the morality of Paris, and the distracted state of France, stood in the most striking contrast. Yet her pure ideality did not prevent her from diligently frequenting the clubs, the tone of which was any thing but ideal, or even decent. At a later period she liked to assemble her friends at her own house, and to listen to their discussions; which for the most part only excited her impatience of men, who never got beyond generalities, and whose enthusiasm evaporated in words. She then had recourse to private interviews with each individual of the party, roused them one by one from their inertia and lethargy, and scolded down their scruples and consideration for others. When warned by a friend of the unruly nature of the Parisian mob, she replied, that bloodhounds were after all indispensable for starting the game. When another mani-

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her *Mémoires* by Dauban and Faugères, only gives unimportant additions to the previously known text. Of greater interest are the lately discovered letters to Buzot in Dauban, *Étude sur Mad. Roland.* Paris 1864. — [1] *Conf.* Crooker, *Essays on the French Revolution*, p. 176 seq.

fested some compassion on seeing the indignities offered to the Queen and the Dauphin, she turned her back on him, and said that greater things were at stake in the Revolution than a woman and a child. He who wishes to take a strong personal interest in her, should be able to overlook this cold fanaticism; and he who examines her policy, as reduced to practice, will find that it consisted exclusively in zealously and incessantly urging on her party to action, but that she was after all too superficial to further their cause by many really original and fructifying ideas.

A less conspicuous, but not less important part in this association, was played by the Abbé Sieyès. He did what neither Brissot nor Mad. Roland could have done, by furnishing his party with a comprehensive and prospective plan of operations. After finding himself almost the principal leader of the revolutionary movement in the summer of 1789, he had retired in disgust when the Revolution had not in all respects kept within the limits which he had traced for it; and he now stood perfectly isolated, and angry with a world which neglected alike the excellence of his logical conclusions, and the persistent efforts of his ambition. He was precisely in the humour to unite himself with a party which was preparing to apply the lever for the overthrow of all existing institutions; and however much he inwardly despised these young and immature Republicans, yet he condescended, in the deepest secrecy, to play the part of their commander-in-chief. The want of practical sense, which so often stands in the way of learned men in political life, was in his case only observable in his more comprehensive theories. In the conduct of current affairs and every-day party struggles, and in the management of individuals, he exhibited both calculating astuteness and indomitable coolness. He warned his associates against prematurely terrifying the nation by the word Republic, and advised them to prepare the way for its introduction by a change in the person of the Monarch; and, generally, to carry on the contest with con-

cealed weapons. He had a way of hinting at the vastness of his experience, and the importance and extent of his connexions, which produced a greater effect than a more explicit statement; and he thus contrived to maintain himself in a certain mysterious superiority, and gradually to bring his associates to a result, the full scope of which they had hardly foreseen.[1]

It may be easily understood from this mingling of heterogeneous elements, that the Gironde could never show the firm and uniform front as a party, which characterised the other Jacobin factions. For the same reason, it will be difficult to state what was the exact nature of the polity which they wished to introduce. Their only clearly defined objects were to possess themselves of the reins of government, to carry on the Revolution, and to destroy the Monarchy by every weapon within their reach.

They proceeded at once—not to perform the great and vital task of internal legislation, the reform of the common-law, or the reconstruction of the system of education, which had been crushed beneath the ruins of the Church—but to the vexed and exciting questions of the day—the overthrow of the monarchy, and—as a step towards this—the more active prosecution of the Clergy and the Emigrés, even at the risk of a European war.

Before entering on the history of these complicated affairs, let us once more take a survey of the general position of Europe. Russia and Sweden wished for war; Spain and Sardinia talked much about it, and Prussia began to take the same direction. It was certain, however, that she could do nothing without the cooperation of Austria, and Leopold was once for all determined to remain at peace; partly from distrust of Prussia, anxiety about Poland and fears for Bel-

[1] For the character of Sieyès *conf.* the *Mémoires de Mallet du Pan*, published by Sayous; and La Marck to Mercy, 30. October. *Correspondance de Mirabeau et La Marck.*

gium,—and partly out of consideration for the wishes of Louis XVI., and the plans of the Feuillants. These last still hoped that the energetic representations of Europe might intimidate the Revolutionists, and wished to see a Congress of all European powers, as the organ of these representations; but they discarded with horror every thought of war, the outbreak of which would endanger their own existence, and in its issue could only serve the interests of the Jacobins or the Emigrés.

In this state of affairs it was ridiculous in the Parisian patriots to affect anxiety about the machinations of the Emigrés. The latter numbered about 4000 men, living partly in Coblentz, partly in Worms and Ettenheim. What could this handful of men undertake, without the help of Austria, against a people which, in spite of their differences, could bring against them, as had been proved in June, no less than 4,000,000 armed citizens. In respect to the Church matters the position of affairs was no doubt far more critical, and contests raged in every Department. Whatever view we may take of the aristocratical character of the ancient Church in France, and the confiscation of its property, it can not well be doubted that the next step which was taken, *viz.* the introduction of the *Constitution Civile du Clergé*, was a wanton act of aggression on the part of the Revolution, and quite uncalled for by the necessities of the times. Had those who took the lead in this movement been influenced by a genuine regard for the freedom and welfare of the people, they would have begun by moderating their own violence against the Church.

It is important to bear these undoubted facts in mind, to avoid falling into one of the greatest illusions by which party spirit and national prejudices have obscured a great historical event. It has been said a thousand times, that the war which France began against the Powers of Europe was simply an act of defence against the hostility with which these Powers, in alliance with the Catholic Clergy, had

threatened the freedom of 1789 and the Constitution of 1791; whereas few facts in history are more indisputable than the very opposite of this proposition. The war was begun by the Gironde to do away with the monarchical constitution of 1789; and Louis XVI., the Feuillants and the Emperor Leopold were attacked by them, because they endeavoured to defend this last bulwark against the Republic. The King wished to bring about a reform of the constitution by peaceable means at a later period; but the Gironde commenced the war with a view to the immediate and violent overthrow of the Constitution. They stood greatly in need of some powerful means of troubling the momentary calm of the popular mind, and frightening back the great mass of the people into the arms of the Jacobin party. The circumstances of the King's flight showed them what they had to do. They knew that if once the people could be persuaded that King, Priests, Emigrés, and Foreign Powers had concerted to restore the *ancien régime* by the aid of German troops, an overwhelming majority of the people would join the Jacobins.

They took up a position in accordance with these views. Decrees for the prosecution of Priests and Emigrés were brought forward in rapid succession. Couthon commenced operations by a speech against the Priests, on the 7th of October. He was a lame and crippled man of mild and friendly character in private life, but in politics intimately associated with Robespierre. The treatment which the Clergy had in future to expect was clearly indicated by his declaration, that the mere presence of the non-juring Priests was an obstacle to the public peace. Claude Fauchet, by his speeches in the *Cercle Social*, had won the Bishopric of Calvados. Finding the peasants of that Department fiercely attached to the ancient Church, he demanded that the State should at any rate not cherish the vipers in its own bosom, and that therefore the pensions of the refractory Priests should be withdrawn. The Right objected, that these pensions

were a compensation for confiscated Church lands, and had been guaranteed by the Constitution. Whereupon Isnard, on the other side, so far from yielding to these representations, reverted to Couthon's view of the matter; and amidst the furious applause of the spectators, who in this Assembly played a still greater part than in the preceding one, demanded the banishment of the Priests from the kingdom. The majority of the Chamber however adhered to the motion of Fauchet—which promised a saving of 30,000,000 francs to the treasury—and empowered the local authorities to remove refractory Priests from their district.

Proceedings were simultaneously taken against the Emigrés: the Right once more appealed to the Constitution, which confirmed the right of emigration. They referred likewise, to the general amnesty, with which the Constituent Assembly had concluded its labours. Brissot now took the lead in the attack. His great speech on the 20th October with which he inaugurated his leadership in the Chamber, is worthy of remark, because it plainly shows that he was far more concerned about the European Powers than about the Emigrés, and that the latter were to him nothing but a pretext for a European war. While he proposed gentler measures against the Emigrés than any of his friends, he roused in glowing terms the national pride of his hearers against the Powers, whom he plainly denounced as the protectors of the Emigration. These Powers, he allowed, were not indeed formidable, because remote, and generally either peaceable or powerless, but he thought it on that very account all the more advisable to deprive them, by a vigorous warlike demonstration, of any wish either to interfere or to mediate. The Girondists perfectly agreed with him on this point, but it seemed to the majority of them absurd to terrify the Emigrés back to their native country by threats, as he proposed. While they wished to banish the Priests, they were particularly anxious not to recall the Emigrés, but to perpetuate their exile, and to keep alive

the fear of their warlike preparations. There was no simpler mode of effecting this than the introduction of terrorizing measures, which at the same time roused their pride, and alarmed them for their own safety. Thus a decree was made on the 8th November, which appointed the 1st January as the term of their return, and condemned to death, without further ceremony, all those Princes and Officials who did not make their appearance by that day. The like penalty was also denounced against the rest, if they took part in seditious meetings. The request of the Right for a definition of the term seditious meetings was not complied with; but the Diplomatic Committee was directed to bring up a detailed report on the relations of the country to Foreign Powers.

The King who, a fortnight before, had in the most urgent terms, as we have seen, exhorted his Brothers to peace, could not make up his mind to have a share in the cruelty of this barbarous decree, and put his veto upon it. This appeared to the Gironde almost a greater gain than the execution of the penal enactment. The Clubs and the Press now vied with one another in complaining of the conspiracy between Louis XVI., the Emigrés and the Powers. It was at this time that the Girondists gained a firm footing in the most important office of the capital. The term of office of the Mayor of Paris now came to an end, and thus an opportunity was afforded of appointing a Revolutionist to the most influential post in the Kingdom. The principal candidate of the Right was General Lafayette, who hoped in this position to regain all his former weight. The Demagogues, however, who had hated him ever since the 17th July, used all their efforts to secure the victory for one of themselves, and cast their eyes upon Péthion, who in the Constituent Assembly had formed the small nucleus of the extreme Left with Robespierre, Salles and Gregoire. They found on this occasion an unexpected ally in the secret influence of the Court, which since 1790 had suffered from no one

greater oppression than from Lafayette, and who looked on Péthion as insignificant and venal. But the result was chiefly owing to the indolence of the great mass of the citizens, since nearly 70,000 voters, who were certainly not all in favour of Péthion, remained at home, so that the latter triumphed over Lafayette by a majority of 6,000, out of 10,000 votes.[1] The other elections turned out no better; Röderer, a zealous ally of Brissot was made Syndic of the Department—Manuel, a writer as frivolous as he was fanatical, Procureur,—and lastly Danton, the leader of the Cordéliers, Vice-procureur of Paris.[2]

On the 22nd November, the report on Foreign affairs was brought up by the Diplomatic Committee. In this body moderate opinions had once more prevailed. It confined itself to simple recommendations that the Government should take the necessary steps to prevent the Rhenish Electors from giving any further encouragement to the Emigrés, or aiding them in their preparations. This was quite in accordance with the opinions of the Court, the minister Delessach, and the Feuillants by whom he was guided—*viz.* the two Lameths, Barnave and Duport—who all shrank from war, but hoped by means of the negotiations proposed by the Committee to bring about the much-desired Congress of the Powers. The majority of the latter had not as yet looked with altogether favourable eyes on the scheme of holding a Congress; some of them because it seemed to them to imperil peace, and others because it would defer the war; so that one of the best-informed of the diplomatists of the period, Count Mercy, wrote on the 28th October:—"In the chapter of hopes the Congress stands first, and three or four months may bring us to this phantasmagoria."

The Gironde, who feared nothing so much as the effect of such a pressure of the Powers on the middle classes or

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[1] *Conf.* Mortimer-Ternaux, I. 44. — [2] Danton was elected by 1162 votes out of 81,000 voters.

the Jacobins, used every effort to nip the project in the bud by an open breach with Austria. We may doubt, however, whether they would at that time have gained a majority, had they not received decisive support from the Right itself. Lafayette, for instance, had a general knowledge of the wishes of the Lameths, the Delessarts, and the Emperor, but had not yet made up his mind what attitude he should assume towards them. In one of their objects—the formation of a second Chamber—he might perhaps have agreed with them, though he differed with them in his views of its constitution. But he would never join them, or walk in their ways; partly, no doubt, because his national pride revolted against the influence of the Powers, and partly because his egotism made the thought intolerable, that the hated Lameths should save the King and carry off the prize of political power. If, on the other hand, he joined the Girondists, he was sure of the command of the army and the conduct of the war. He remembered his old schemes for the freedom of Belgium, and saw himself once more loaded with honours, and in the enjoyment of popular favour; he gave his voice for war.

The majority of the Right was under his influence, or that of his friends. His first step was to raise a well-appointed army. The few Royalists in the Chamber did not venture to oppose it; Barnave himself had declared that without a strong army it would be impossible to make any progress in internal politics. It was thought that the increase of the military force would necessarily bring on a war, but that it might improve its discipline, and furnish the King with a trustworthy force at home. As to the Left, Picard expressed its hopes with unreserved impetuosity. "If the French people once draws the sword, it will fling the scabbard far away. Inflamed by the fire of freedom, it can, if roused to action, single-handed change the whole face of the earth, and make the tyrants tremble on their thrones of clay." On the 29th of November, therefore, on the same day on which the decree against the Priests received the finishing touch,

it was resolved amid the vociferous applause of all parties,[1] that the King should call upon the Electors to break up the army of Emigrés,—immediately fix the compensation to be given to the German Princes possessed of estates in Alsace—make a liberal change in the Diplomatic Corps—and forthwith draw together the necessary forces on the frontiers, to give emphasis to these demands.[2]

The Court was overwhelmed by this sudden union of parties. It was in vain that Malouet had the King advised to declare, before giving any answer, that he would leave Paris, perhaps for Fontainebleau. In vain did Montmorin throw himself at the feet of the Queen, and conjure her rather to meet the danger at once, than ruin herself by further concessions. The Court feared the consequences of any opposition;—they feared the immediate evil of an insurrection.[3] They did not venture, therefore, to offer any open resistance to the first approach of danger, but resorted to the pernicious artifices of the feeble and oppressed—an apparent assent to the demands of the adversary, in the hope of being enabled thereby to prepare in undisturbed secrecy the means of safety. The King returned an answer favourable in the main to the wishes of the Assembly. It was Marie Antoinette who on this occasion directed the steps of

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[1] Even Mortimer-Ternaux, I. 42, now allows this to have been the case. — [2] *Mémoires de Lafayette*, VI. 42, *Mémoires de Vaublanc*, I. 335. Vaublanc was himself active in the Assembly in support of these measures and of Lafayette, whom he pointed out as Commander of the forces to be set on foot. Buchez falls into a great mistake when (VI. 284, 2nd Edit.) he regards Vaublanc as a tool of the Court and the Feuillants, who were entirely averse to warlike preparations. Louis Blanc (VI. 219 sq.) is equally wrong in supposing that Narbonne and Lafayette did not desire a real and serious war against the Powers, but only insignificant operations against the Rhenish Electors. There was no such option at at that time; every one knew that an attack on Treves or Worms would be immediately followed by war with the emperor. — [3] *Mallet du Pan's Mémoires*, I. 248.

her vacillating husband.[1] She still held fast to the idea of intimidating the Jacobins by a Congress of the foreign Powers, to meet in Aix-la-Chapelle perhaps, and to be supported by military preparations. In this way she hoped that both peace might be preserved, and the Royal authority restored. She had recently and repeatedly written to this effect to Vienna and Brussels, but had found Leopold so little inclined to act with energy, that she learned with pain and indignation to regard her coldly calculating brother, almost as a traitor to the holiest family duties. It was on this account that now, when the Gironde began their attack, she made an essential change in her plans. She detested the Emigrés, as we have seen, not much less than the Jacobins, and had consequently hitherto held no communication with their patrons at the Courts of St. Petersburg, Stockholm and Berlin. Now however she made advances towards these Courts. *On the 3d of December she* wrote to Catharine II., and *the Kings of Spain and Sweden*, and induced Louis to write in the same spirit to *the King* of Prussia. She announced to them that in spite of the King's acceptance of the constitution, the throne was seriously threatened by the factions. She begged Catharine for her cooperation in procuring the only means of safety—the summoning of a congress. She made the twofold request that the Powers should, on the one hand, not encourage the Emigrés in their mischievous zeal for war, and on the other, exhort the unwilling and tardy Emperor to an energetic support of his unhappy sister. Louis at the same time gave Baron Breteuil express orders to hold the same language to the Courts. In doing so he did not conceal from himself the possibility that the desired measures might fail of the intended effect—that the meeting of the Powers in Congress

[1] The correspondence of the Queen with Mercy and Fersen (*vid.* Arneth Marie Antoinette, Joseph II., Leopold II.—and *Feuillet de Conches*, Vol. IV September to Dec. 1791) leaves no doubt on this head

might inspire the Jacobins, not with fear, but with fury, and in that case not lead to peace, but accelerate the war. But he saw no alternative, and he hoped that in the latter case, his official acts would not be misinterpreted by the Powers, and would prevent any suspicion from being awakened in France that he had had a secret understanding with foreign countries. He would then, to all appearance, himself direct the warlike operations against the Powers, but do every thing in secret to bring the crisis as quickly as possible to an issue favourable to the French Monarchy. We see on to what a perilous declivity this first secret step had brought the unhappy Prince. Had the Gironde been aware of the King's deliberations, how justly might they even then have boasted of the correctness of their surmises! And if they succeeded in bringing about the declaration of war, how impossible would it become to Louis, whatever were his sentiments, not to be virtually the ally of the enemy, and the foe of his own people!

The consequences of the decree of the 29th showed themselves first in Paris with uncontrollable rapidity. Montmorin retired from the Cabinet, and was succeeded the late Minister of the Interior, Delessart. The Minister at war, Duportail, a zealous adherent of the peace policy, immediately tendered his resignation, and Louis not having dared openly to oppose the decree, could not avoid appointing a man of revolutionary opinions to the vacant post. He selected a man, who at any rate by descent and birth belonged to one of the great Aristocratic families, and who manifested a warm attachment to the throne. But in spite of these qualities, Count Louis Narbonne belonged in his views and aims, to that younger generation of the French Nobility which took such an active part in the commencement of the Revolution, and exercised in many quarters so powerful an influence;—to that clique of clever and frivolous men of the world, who engaged in the Revolution, as formerly in a court intrigue, solely as an opening for personal ambition; and who

with all their *demagogie* always remained men of rank and fashion, rich, magnificent and pleasure-loving. Narbonne had been from early youth on friendly terms with the chief specimens of this class with the Orleanist Biron, and the Fayettist Talleyrand, by whom he was brought into close contact with his friend Lafayette. Setting aside his political and moral principles, he was in other respects amiable, brave, and adroit; one who, with the same audacity, and equal zest, would engage in a questionable love affair, or lead a charge of cavalry, or try a political experiment on which the fate of a nation depended. He was recommended to official circles by Lafayette and Talleyrand.[1] He was likewise patronised by Necker's daughter, Mad. de Stael, who had just come to Paris with her husband, the Swedish Ambassador; and who, full of the consciousness of being the daughter of an illustrious father, and of her own claims as a talented woman and a zealous patriot, sought with tingling impatience to extend her influence in all directions. Her husband was the representative of a Monarch who wished to undertake at the head of the Emigrés, a Crusade against the whole Revolution. Mad. de Stael, however, did not allow herself to be restrained by such vulgar considerations; and it was in her saloons that Narbonne's nomination as Minister of the Revolutionary war was decided upon; and Narbonne himself perfectly understood the task he was intended to perform. He was connected with the Gironde through his friendship with another lady, the wife of Condorcet; he had frequent interviews with Brissot, and had no trouble in coming to an understanding with him. He was indeed still farther removed from any participation in Brissot's republican schemes than Lafayette himself; he desired not only to uphold the Monarchy, but if possible to increase its power. But, as he said, a man must comprehend the times in which he lives. In the present day nothing

[1] Morris's Diary, Feb. 4th.

could be done without universal popularity, and bold *demagogie*, but he who recognised this fact, and manfully, and with a true love of freedom, put his shoulder to the wheel, had no need of a Congress of the foreign Powers. On the contrary, he thought that to look to them for aid would betray a degrading dependence;—that in adopting the proposed preparations for war, they were taking the best means of raising a fine army, and inspiring respect both at home and abroad. In a letter to his friends at this period, he told them that by placing themselves at the head of the movement, they would best preserve peace; and that if war could not, after all, be avoided, they would be able by skill and boldness to rout at once both Europe and the Jacobins.

The King, who was at this time quite destitute of influential advisers,—since Barnave never gained a hearing from him, and seldom even from the Queen, and the other Feuillants only transacted business with the Minister[1]—could make no plausible objection to these views. The other Ministers did not venture to oppose at once their own colleague and the Assembly. Louis therefore on the 14th December announced to the National Assembly, that he had informed the Elector of Treves, that if the army of Emigrés was not disbanded within a month, he would consider him as an enemy; that 150,000 men, in three divisions, under Generals Rochambeau, Luckner and Lafayette, were to be stationed on the frontiers; and that he, the King, would himself propose a declaration of war, should his representations prove of no avail. The Assembly expressed the extreme satisfaction they derived from the King's great energy and patriotism, and in this mood they silently allowed Louis five days afterwards to reject the law against the Priests, as he had previously done the decree against the Emigrés.[2]

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[1] Pellenc to La Marck, 3d Jan. *Correspondance entre Mirabeau et La Marck*, Vol. III. —, [2] "I yield so often," he said, "that they can give me my way too for once." l. c.

The views of Narbonne and his friends, however, were by no means bounded by this preliminary arming. They saw well how insufficient the forces of France at that time were to contend against a coalition of the rest of Europe. They therefore drew up a plan, by which the whole system of alliances which had prevailed in France would be changed, and the whole of Europe turned upside down.[1] The idea originated with Biron. This man, once the fashionable hero of every capital, handsome, rich, and deeply in debt, was renowned for his adventures, love affairs, and midnight brawls, and mixed up with every intrigue. For a time he was in favour with the Queen, and then an associate of the Duke of Orleans; he had now become a General in the Army of the North, and was filled with the ambition of appearing in the character of a warrior. No sooner did he hear of Narbonne's appointment than he wrote to their common friend Talleyrand: "The measure of the 14th is splendid, if you gain over Prussia; otherwise you will play a dangerous game with bad cards." Talleyrand joyfully acquiesced. "Here lies our salvation," he answered; "if the King of Prussia is with us, we are masters of the situation; distrust will vanish away, and the Constitution will gain ground." They then united their efforts to bring England over to their side, and thought that after her previous alliance with Prussia, she would be easily induced to join them. The renewal of diplomatic relations which had been solicited by the National Assembly, offered a natural occasion for such negotiations; and Biron, who knew all the dissolute elements of the Berlin Court by heart, busied himself to find a suitable person for this Embassy. We see in what a flighty way the noble adventurers of that day carried on their State policy. They hoped by means of an intrigue conducted by valets and pimps to mould the policy of great Empires,

[1] The following is from the unpublished correspondence between Narbonne, Biron and Talleyrand. *Dépôt de la Guerre*, Paris.

like so much clay, into whatever shape they pleased! If a sufficient sum of money were offered to Bischoffswerder, they flattered themselves that they should gain Prussia as an ally of the Revolution against Austria—that very Prussia, which was at the present moment angry with Austria, for showing so little inclination to make war upon the Revolution. Biron's hopes, of course, were soon dashed, for Barnave and Delessart would have nothing to do with Prussia on account of her well-known desire for war; though they pretended to consent to Narbonne's wishes, they frustrated the negotiations in the very commencement, by choosing Count Segur for the post of Ambassador, a man who was greatly disliked at the Prussian Court. Biron was furious when informed of Segur's appointment, and immediately gave up all hope, and determined to impeach the treacherous Minister before the National Assembly. Meanwhile exclusive attention was directed to military measures.

In the disordered state of all the military establishments, a large vote of money was a matter of the most urgent necessity. Narbonne, therefore, asked for an extraordinary grant of 20 million francs in specie, a sum which at the then value of gold was equal to at least 30 millions of *assignats*. With ordinary Statesmen this one consideration would have sufficed thoroughly to dispel all warlike thoughts, as the financial difficulties were already enormous. The produce of the direct taxes was almost null. At the close of the present year even the Departments had not settled the amount of the contributions to be levied on each district—and the distribution of these quotas among the Communes and tax-payers was not even begun. Thus, instead of the prescribed 48 millions, the month of September yielded only 40, October 28, and November 30 million francs; so that on this quarter of a year there was an acknowledged deficit of 46 millions—or nearly ⅓ of the expected income. Now either because the proceeds of the taxes were even below these sums, or that the extraordinary expenses were

greater than appeared in the official accounts, certain it is, that at the beginning of December, the 600 millions which the Constituent Assembly had voted in June were all expended:—472 millions towards the liquidation of the Debt, and 128 millions for the administrative expenses of the year. As the Constituent Assembly had expended an additional 800 millions, there remained no doubt, that by the end of the year, the Government created by the Revolution would have consumed a *milliard* of the State capital.

These figures had very little effect on the National Assembly. In all financial affairs they placed implicit confidence in a manufacturer of Montpellier, Peter Joseph Cambon, who impressed his inexperienced colleagues with respect by his knowledge of mercantile book-keeping, and thundered down every objection suggested by the principles of ordinary State-craft with patriotic energy; declaring the resources of the Revolution to be inexhaustible, as long as men adhered with fidelity to revolutionary paths. In the Constituent Assembly, Montesquiou had at any rate condescended to give explanatory details. Even then indeed the whole truth was never brought to light; but still the Government tried to save appearances, to show vouchers for expenditure, and point out the sources of their income, and so to make up some sort of balance in the accounts. The time was now past for scruples of this nature. Cambon declared, in so many words, that the Treasury was empty, and that consequently new paper must be issued; that the five-franc notes had driven the silver pieces out of circulation, and that therefore the new *assignats* must be divided into notes of 10 and 15 sous each. Two speakers thereupon pointed out the mischief that would befall the poorer class from the issue of such worthless paper; but no one attempted to confute them, because the measure, whether good or bad, seemed unavoidable On the 17th Dec. the fabrication of 300 millions of *assignats* was decreed; so that the whole sum now amounted to 2100 millions. The maximum of circulation—hitherto limited to 1400

millions—was now fixed at 1600 millions, and the issue gradually completed in notes of 50 down to 10 sous.

Thus were funds obtained, and the Gironde prepared with renewed courage to negotiate the credit demanded by Narbonne. "The war," they said, "will be a blessing to the nation—the greatest misfortune would be to have no war. If the Princes wish to attack us, we must be beforehand with them;—if they do not intend to do so, we must put an end to their trifling with the sword." Even Brissot acknowledged that the latter was the case, and that the Emperor was by no means eager for war. But he added that they ought to reply to his special pleading about the Alsatian Princes, "that the majesty of the Peoples was not be bound by the treaties of tyrants." Herault de Sechelles expressed the real position of affairs in still clearer language. "Do they talk of their empty scheme of a Congress? Should they propose to us the alteration of a single article in the Constitution, we should move the previous question with a laugh at their absurdity." Very significant was his expression of regret that the Minister had not given them more definite intelligence of the hostilities which threatened France. Such a declaration, he said, would have given them power to disregard the two vetos and to do all that the weal of the State required. They would then have been in their right, according to the Roman formula *videant Consules*, and the moment would have arrived to veil the image of Freedom, and to look solely to the preservation of their existence.

Finally, Condorcet roused the Assembly to enthusiasm by a manifesto, in which he proposed that the French People should decide on the mode of conducting the war. The chief point in it was, that they—the people of France—desired peace with all nations, and wished to make no conquests; that they should treat even those nations whose Princes began the war, as friends in need of liberty.

The whole future policy of the Gironde was comprehended

in this debate. War in all directions, without regard to the law of nations; and by means of war, the establishment of revolutionary rule over France, and the extension of the Revolution though the neighbouring States.

The 20 millions were unanimously voted on 30th Dec., and on 1st Jan. the decree was published threatening the leaders of the Emigration with the penalties of high treason.

An unexpected opposition on the part of the Jacobins gave the Girondists an opportunity of bringing their ultimate views still more unreservedly to light. Robespierre, as we have already remarked in connection with the events of May 1790, had always feared war. The ends which the Gironde hoped to gain by it were indeed altogether identical with his own, as he himself made known in the plainest terms, but he thought the means ill chosen; he feared that as soon as war was declared, a political Dictatorship would fall to the lot of the General who directed it. He regarded all the noise that was being made as an intrigue to place Lafayette and Narbonne at the head of France; and he took the same view of the probable effects of a declaration of war as Narbonne himself. What could be more glorious, he said, than a sacred war for Freedom, for the extermination of Tyranny, for the liberation of the peoples of the world? "But then such a war," he argued, "must be carried on with unshackled strength, and under trustworthy leaders. And you ask us to go to the shambles amid the applause of the Court, and under the directions of a Narbonne, and the command of a Marquis de Lafayette! Therefore," he said in conclusion, "first overthrow the Court, turn out Narbonne, and annihilate Lafayette, and then, and not till then, can you speak without treachery of a foreign war, and then I will gladly give you my support."

Louis XVI. might have told him that it was not the war but the Revolution which led to a military Dictatorship. Revolution seems indeed to place Freedom on the throne, but in reality Force, and the greatest force is in the army.

The demagogical intrigues of Robespierre, no less than the warlike zeal of Brissot, paved the way for General Buonaparte. The liberty of France was, indeed, rendered hopeless by the declaration of war, but not, as Robespierre had apprehended, because it stifled the Revolution, but because, as Brissot rightly foresaw, it necessarily accelerated its fiery course.

As this last question was the only point of difference between the two leaders of the Revolution, Brissot's superiority was quite decided. When Robespierre warned them of the treachery of the Court, he replied, with great force, that they were in urgent need of such treachery, as the only means of inflaming the passions of the people, and bringing about the fall of the tyrants; it would raise a storm, he said, by which the herd of intriguers would be swept away, but the power of the Revolution developed in gigantic proportions.[1]

Robespierre had no other means of meeting these unanswerable deductions than raising suspicions against his opponent himself. Brissot, he said, took the same course as Narbonne, and therefore, like Narbonne, he was a betrayer of the People. Brissot was a successful opponent of Robespierre in the rostra of the Jacobin Club; and this the latter, suspicious and irritable, and accustomed already to feel himself in that sphere the Autocrat of the Democracy, could never forgive him. By degrees he succeeded in prejudicing the Jacobins more and more against Brissot, and nothing contributed to this so much as the increasing power of Brissot himself, which was sufficient to expose him to the dominant love of opposition which characterized the Jacobins. But what availed such an *amende* to Robespierre's wounded self-love, when the actual results were continually turning out more and more decidedly in accordance with Brissot's wishes?

[1] To the same purport Louvet, in his *Mémoires;* Mallet, I. 247, Röderer in the Jacobin Club.

Robespierre had, in fact, no conception of the disposition of his adversary. He could not comprehend that any one loved danger for its own sake, and that the rash and intoxicating game, on which by the declaration of war the future of the State was staked, had a positive charm for a man of restless energy. He himself, persevering and pedantic, moved on step by step in his unvarying course. The European Revolution was, in his eyes, the logical result of the Revolution in France; and that Brissot, by an audacious inversion, should use the former as a means of promoting the latter was to him incomprehensible and suspicious. He was, moreover, as ignorant of foreign affairs as Frenchmen generally are, and found himself in all these discussions entirely out of his element. In fact every thing connected with war and armies was repugnant to his mind. He liked to speak but not to strike; and war appeared to him a vulgar, and, under some circumstances, a dangerous brawl. That Brissot should labour with such zeal to kindle a war was only intelligible to him on the supposition of the basest treachery.

On the other side, meanwhile, in the camp of the Girondists, and in the Ministry at war, the most triumphant joy prevailed at their success in preparing the way for the great catastrophe. Delessart consented at last to send out a second agent after Ségur, with abundant means of bribery. In case of failure, they had another scheme, of gaining over the Duke of Brunswick,—whose military renown at the head of the Prussians they feared—as leader of the French army.[1] Talleyrand himself was to go over to England on a confidential mission, and if Pitt should continue obstinate, he was to aid the Opposition in turning out that Minister. Narbonne made a hasty journey of inspection to the frontiers, for the purpose of seeing in person the generals in command—gaining over Rochambeau and Luckner to the new system by

[1] Correspondence between Narbonne and the Duke in Girtanner's *Polit. Annal.*, II. 242. Particulars of the whole scheme in Mallet, I. 259.

investing them with the baton of Marshal,[1] and concerting some more definite plan with Lafayette. Whether they were really to have war or not, no one knew with any certainty —whether they really desired it, the Girondists had made up their minds, but probably not Narbonne. With cheerful frivolity, and complete self confidence, he approached a crisis, which in its development was to bury himself, his friends and enemies, King and Constitution.

It was just at this moment that the Emperor's answer to the resolutions of the 14th December arrived. It was dated the 21st December. In this reply he repudiated all hostile intentions, but declared that as chief of the Empire he could not allow a hostile violation of the imperial frontiers; and that he had, therefore, given orders to General Bender, in Luxembourg, to protect the Electorate of Treves against any invasion of the French. King Louis, he said, knew how grieved he should be if those measures were rendered necessary, which, in such a case, it would be the bounden duty of the Emperor, the Empire, and the other allied Powers, to take. A second note of January the 5th reiterated that any violation of the imperial territory would necessarily bring on a war. At the same time, however, the Government of Brussels and the Elector of Treves announced to the French Monarch, that the Emperor had demanded of them the disarming of the Emigrés, and had made this a condition of his protection, and thereby effected the discontinuance of warlike preparations.

And in fact, Treves, now seriously alarmed, had ordered the entire dispersion of the Emigrés. The Diet of the Electorate, which by no means desired an attack of the French, sent up representations to the Elector, which had nothing in them of the usual "obedient unto death" tone, and which

[1] Biron had suggested this, in order to procure for the Generals, who found their *assignats* insufficient, an increase of pay. (Letter to Narbonne, Dec. 9.) Narbonne removed the lilies from the Marshal's baton. (Pellenc to La Marck, 3. Jan.)

filled him with half angry, half alarmed, displeasure. Hitherto Coblentz had presented a noisy and merry scene, in which the French had played the masters in the house of the kind Uncle of their Princes. Court festivals, duels, love intrigues and drilling, followed one another in gay succession. But now the joyful bustle must cease, and it was only in a few villages, behind the backs of inactive magistrates, that the Emigrés could still whet their swords. Calonne, the all-powerful Minister of exiled France, was no less angry with the Emperor, than with Louis XVI. Even the latter adhered to his opinion that the operations of the Emigrés could bring him nothing but destruction; and through Calonne's old opponent, Breteuil, he sent instructions to the Courts in accordance with the Emperor's views. He most emphatically urged these views upon the Queen. He repeatedly pictured to her the horrors of the war which would be kindled by a league between the Powers and the Emigrés—the difficulty of subduing the nation, which would then stand together as one man—the impossibility, even after a victory, of establishing any enduring order of things upon ruins and corpses. It was impracticable, he said, to take no notice of the temper of the people; and that, therefore, the league of the Powers must not meddle with the essential principles of the Constitution. Their claims, in his opinion, ought to apply only to their previous complaints on the subject of the Alsatian Princes, the spoliation of the Pope, and the late warlike preparations in France; they must, in short, content themselves with what was attainable—the personal safety of the King and the Nobility, and the reestablishment of the Royal authority,—and must leave the rest to better times.[1]

The more clearly this policy was revealed in official documents, the more plainly did the Gironde recognise the danger

[1] Secret correspondence between Leopold and Marie Antoinette in the *Revue rétrospective.*

which it threatened to their own plans. If they did not forestall that policy, they ran the risk of standing alone in the country. Isnard gave utterance to these sentiments candidly enough on the 5th of January. The contest, he said, no longer turned on the restoration of the *ancien régime*, or the establishment of a Republic—for even the friends of the former state of things acknowledged the impossibility of returning to it—and the Republicans from their small numbers were hardly to be reckoned as a party. But, he continued, there was the mass of moderate men, who adhered, indeed, to the Constitution, but who loved repose above all things, and stood opposed to the zealous Patriots,—the genuine friends of liberty and equality. "The fear of anarchy frightens them away from the truest patriots, and throws them into the arms of the falsely moderate party, the most dangerous of all—the rich, the egotistical, the enemies of equality." The contest, he said, had begun for the salvation or the destruction of equality. Robespierre and Marat, the *bonnets de laine* and the pikemen themselves, could not have invented a more exact definition of the real state of things. It was not the Constitution in its positive principles which was threatened, but the rule of the mob, and the Demagogues who led it. To avoid this most immediate cause of anxiety—the victory of the moderates—the Gironde rushed into war, and far greater though more remote dangers. No reasonable man could conceal from himself, that it was all over with the Revolution, if the Powers should carry on the war with quick and crushing blows; but meanwhile, these enemies were far away. Men trusted to the chapter of accidents, and only one thing was certain, that the war would destroy the French Monarchy, if the Powers continued for a few months longer to temporize in their accustomed manner.

The Gironde, therefore, did not hesitate for a moment. With the greatest zeal they sought to cut off every chance of an understanding. Gensonné, the *Rapporteur* of the Di-

plomatic Committee, dwelt on the orders given to General Bender, pointed out the concert of the Powers referred to in the Emperor's note, and proposed to put the categorical question—whether the Emperor would renounce all attempts against the Constitution, and, in accordance with their ancient alliance, support France against the other Powers. He further proposed, that if Leopold did not give a binding declaration on these points within three weeks, he should be regarded as an enemy. Before the debate on this motion began, Guadet rose from his presidential chair. One point in the motion, he said, had so powerfully excited his feelings, that he begged permission to give them vent in words. And then, mounting the tribune, he denounced the concert of the Powers, whose object was to change the Constitution, as a fact which must fill every honourable and patriotic heart with annihilating wrath. In a furious torrent of words, he appealed to the pride of the French People—"the only free People of Europe,"—the pride which was now to be succeeded by the deepest humiliation, that of receiving laws from despised foreigners,—from a hand of crowned despots. "I call upon you to declare every Frenchman who takes any part in any negotiation whatever respecting our Constitution, as an infamous, traitor to his country."

Such language suited alike the purposes of the Gironde, the ideas of Lafayette, and the passions of the strangers gallery. The whole Assembly was in a blaze of excitement;—without consideration, and without opposition, the motion was carried amidst continual cries of "Liberty or Death!" Delessart was present, and saw the hopes of his friends destroyed. He had not the energy to resist, but cried "Freedom or Death!" like the rest, and demanded of the King his immediate consent to the decree, or all, he said, would be irremediably lost.

This was the reply to the wish of the Feuillants to work on the minds of the French people by the reasonable representations of the Powers. War was inevitable; for the

very programme which the Emperor had adopted and used to restrain the Northern Powers from attacking France, had now been declared by the French to be a *casus belli*. And with what burning zeal were these sentiments spread abroad among the Parisian Democrats! On the 17th of Jan. Brissot expressed his indignation at that part of the report which proposed that the Emperor was first to be questioned about his fidelity to his alliance with France. His coalition with other Powers, referred to in his note, was of itself a breach of the treaty of 1756, and an overt act of hostility. They ought, he said, to make this declaration to the Emperor at once, and to tell him moreover, that nothing but the immediate dissolution of that coalition could avert the war. "What necessity is there for any declaration," cried Bishop Fauchet—"war between Freedom and Tyranny has long existed. Call upon all nations to take part with you—offer them your help against their despots, and tear up all the treaties by which kings have hitherto enslaved their peoples." "For that," replied a member of the Right, "affairs are not yet ripe."

During these debates Narbonne had completed his journey to the frontiers; had seen the Generals at Metz, and had summoned them to a Council of war at Paris. He raised the courage of the Assembly by a brilliant description of the fortresses and regiments, and begged for a more effectual recruiting law, since there was a deficit of 50,000 men in the troops of the line. He would have liked to incorporate the battalions of volunteers with the regiments, and thus to bring them under military discipline; but popular as he was with the Democrats of the Assembly, he could not succeed in this, since their wish was the very reverse,—*viz.* that the soldier should merge in the citizen. They contented themselves, therefore, with raising the bounty money, lowering the standard of height, and instituting public ceremonies of enlistment. It subsequently appeared that the results of these measures were very insignificant; and immediately afterwards, General Noailles announced that Cavalry and

Artillery were in a state of complete demoralization. But the zeal of the Assembly was not to be checked; on the contrary, they decreed, on the 25th of January, that the King should ask the Emperor whether he would renounce all attempts against France; and that war should be declared unless a satisfactory answer was returned before the 1st of March. No one doubted of the issue. The Ministry called on the Generals to express their views as to the best method of conducting the war. Rochambeau, a soldier of the old school, accustomed to methodical strategy, and averse to the Revolutionary modes of proceeding, expressed the very unpopular opinion, that in the present bad condition of the troops, nothing more was possible than the defence of the frontier; and that any act of aggression would be injurious. All the more zealously did Luckner meet the wishes of Narbonne and the Gironde. He had formerly acquired a reputation in the Seven-years war, as a partisan against the French; he had great personal courage, but possessed very little ability as a General, and none as a Statesman. Being without personal convictions, he might be won over, especially in his cups, to any opinion whatever. He now declared with great energy, that they ought not to allow themselves to be put upon in any way, but make short work with the Emperor; that, he, Luckner, intended to cross the Rhine, take Mayence, throw the whole German Empire into a state of ferment, and compel the Emperor to acknowledge the French Constitution in Vienna itself. His associates were almost obliged to moderate his fervid zeal. Brissot and Condorcet considered it more useful to occupy the attention of the German Empire by exciting its inhabitants, (their agents were already very active in the Breisgau and the Palatinate), but they wished to carry the war into Belgium, where they also hoped to raise a rebellion, and reckoned on the inaction of Prussia. This master-stroke Lafayette intended to deal with his own hand. He and the other Party Chiefs were already in active correspondence with the mal-

contents in Belgium and Liège, while count Bethune was arming a number of Belgian exiles in Douai.

Such was the point at which they had arrived in Paris. The Emperor, on the other hand, had as yet come to no final agreement with any of the Powers. A negotiation with Holland was pending, but hitherto without result; and he had separated himself from Spain, Sweden and Russia, by his resolution to have nothing to do with the Emigrés, or with the restoration of the *ancien régime*. In Belgium 30,000 Austrians stood opposed to the 100,000 French, the number which the muster-roll of the armies of the North and Centre contained. To the Breisgau, which was threatened by internal disturbances and the army of Luckner, Leopold determined to send 6,000 men, and to keep 30,000 in Bohemia, ready to march. At the same time he carried on his negotiations with Prussia, on the same basis as before. "I will not," he writes to the Queen in February, "oblige the factions who now carry the French people with them, by declaring openly for the Counter-Revolution, and thereby delivering over the moderate party into their hands. I have come to an understanding on this point with Prussia, nor will I, in treating with any Power, swerve from these principles,—that we are not to assist the Emigrés, nor interfere by act with the internal affairs of France, except in case of personal danger to the Royal Family; and that in no case are we to aim at the overthrow of the Constitution, but only to favour its improvement by conciliating means. Our measures have no other object than the encouragement of the moderate party, and the furtherance of a just and reasonable settlement, which, by reconciling the interests of all parties, shall secure the freedom and happiness of France."[1]

[1] The Minister Delessart wrote subsequently from his prison to Necker: "*Ma défense sera curieuse..par la manifestation de ce qui c'est passé dans les cours étrangères, par la démonstration qu'on ne nous voulait pas faire la guerre, par la preuve sans réplique, que c'est nous qui l'avons provoquée, et mis l'Europe contre nous.*" The daggers of the September assassins destroyed this défence.

CHAPTER II.

FALL OF THE FEUILLANTS.

REVOLT OF THE NEGROES IN ST. DOMINGO.—THE PIKES IN PARIS.—BLOODY ATROCITIES IN AVIGNON.—DEMOCRACY IN MARSEILLES.—SEQUESTRATION OF THE ESTATES OF THE EMIGRÉS.—DISTURBANCES IN ALL THE PROVINCES.—THE FEUILLANTS WISH TO REFORM THE CONSTITUTION.—AUSTRIA WISHES TO SUPPORT THEM.—TALLEYRAND HOLDS OUT HOPES OF FRIENDSHIP WITH ENGLAND.—LAFAYETTE AND NARBONNE AGAINST THE FEUILLANTS.—DISMISSAL OF NARBONNE.—LAFAYETTE AND BRISSOT OVERTHROW THE MINISTRY.—THE GIRONDE FORMS A NEW CABINET.

THE Girondists had other reasons also for thinking that their time was come. "We too," said Mad. Roland, "wanted to make a Revolution—the second and greater Revolution." If their object was by means of foreign war to overwhelm the crown, and by its storms to burst asunder the weak bands of the existing Constitution, it would almost seem, since the beginning of the year, as if there had been no need of this dangerous measure, so fearfully did the internal dissolution of all social and political relations begin to show itself.

In November, when Brissot was making his first speeches in favour of war, the tidings, at first vague but soon terribly definite, reached the Assembly, of the ruin and destruction of St. Domingo, the richest colony of France. Immediately before the Revolution, this Island had attained a height of prosperity not surpassed in the history of European colonies. The greatest part of its soil was covered by plantations on a gigantic scale, which supplied half Europe with sugar, coffee and cotton. In 1788 it exported produce to the value of 150 million francs to France,[1] four-fifths

[1] Arnould, *Balance de Commerce.* Report of the Minister Joli, Juli 10. 1792.

of which was re-exported to the north of Europe by the French dealers, who were always ready to support the Planters, when necessary, with the whole power of their capital. The good fortune of the Island had been still further enhanced, by the passing of a measure in 1786, by which—contrary to the system of monopoly generally adhered to—the colony was allowed to trade directly with foreign countries. Since that time the Planters had doubled their produce, and a large amount of French capital poured into the Island for investment—a hundred million francs from Bordeaux alone. The returns were already splendid, and still greater were expected. The Planters lived like Princes; all the luxuries of a tropical climate, and of European civilisation, were at their command. On their vast estates they ruled over thousands of negro slaves, without feeling any power above them; and since the emancipation of the American Colonies, they had occasionally asked themselves why they still remained in dependence on the mother country.

When the States-general were summoned in France, the Planters also wished to share in the new freedom, and the sovereignty of the People. They had, moreover, in the towns of the Island, a dissolute and restless population below them; for the wealth of the Island had for many years past enticed over a number of ambitious spirits from all parts and classes of the mother country—artisans and soldiers, merchants and sailors, retail traders and publicans. At their political meetings differences arose with the Royal authorities; and discord prevailed among themselves on the question, whether they should demand representation in the Assembly, or entire independence of it. Soon however a new element showed itself in the interior of the Island, at the appearance of which all previous contentions were thrown into the shade. Between the large plantations about 15,000 free people of colour, mulattoes and emancipated negroes, lived on small farms, supporting themselves by the labour of their hands, knowing nothing of the wealth and the pleasures, the civilization and the luxury,

of the Planters, and entirely excluded by the jealousy of the whites from all participation in their social and political life. Now, however, the doctrine of the rights of humanity was heard in Domingo as well as in France; the people of colour began to feel that they were men, and demanded political rights in the first place, from the Assembly of Planters, and when scornfully rejected by them, at the bar of the National Assembly at Paris. There Péthion and Robespierre took up their cause, while Barnave pleaded for the Planters as the true pillars of the Revolution in Domingo. The National Assembly, thrown into a dilemma between the interests of French commerce, and the doctrine of the "Rights of man," wavered and came to no decisive resolution. The mulattoes at length lost all patience, and took up arms under Ogé, but their revolt was quickly suppressed by the French regiments under the energetic Colonel Mauduit, and the rebels were punished with horrible cruelty for the exercise of the right of insurrection.

Unfortunately, however, Mauduit had rendered himself terrible to the white men who longed for liberty, as well as to the unruly Mulattoes. Some months before the rising of the Mulattoes he had dispersed the Assembly of the Whites with an armed force, and had firmly upheld the Royal authorities. This the Planters could not forgive; they excited his own troops against him, by a systematic agitation, like that of the Jacobins in Paris; and never rested till Mauduit fell a viction to a mutiny of his soldiers. The day of retribution came quickly enough. In May 1791, the extreme Left of the National Assembly succeeded in passing a decree, which admitted the free men of colour to the exercise of the franchise. The news of this event fell like a thunderbolt amidst the troubles of the Island; the Whites were resolved rather to throw off the yoke of the mother country than submit to so degrading an association; the Mulattoes determined to realise, at any cost, their now legitimate rights; and as they could not hope by themselves to subdue their

white opponents—who doubled them in number,—they had recourse to the extreme measure of rousing the negro slaves to rebellion.

Of these there were at that time about 400,000 on the Island. Their treatment differed according to the disposition of their owners; but alas! there were never wanting cases in which cruelty, avarice, or lust, had made the lot of the slaves intolerable. And therefore from the very commencement of the French dominion, there had never been entire tranquillity, but larger or smaller bands of fugitive negroes, or Maroons, had made the interior of the mountains unsafe. As they were always worsted in every collision with the regular troops, the people of Domingo were quite accustomed to this state of things, and did not apprehend the possibility of danger from that quarter. Now however the Maroons and Mulattoes formed a coalition, and in a moment the revolt broke out far and wide in every district of the Island. Within a month 600 Plantations were reduced to ashes; hundreds of thousands of men ran to arms, the Whites were hunted like wild beasts, prisoners impaled and sawn in pieces, women outraged to death, and the open country ravaged up to the very walls of the towns. The Whites defended themselves with the energy of despair, but now they felt the want of discipline in the troops, and of energetic command. As early as September they saw no other chance of safety than an agreement with the Mulattoes, to whom at last they granted equal political rights. But at the very same time Barnave had carried the revocation of the Edict of May through the National Assembly, and thereby once more subjected the Mulattoes, as far as law could do so, to the arbitrary will of the Whites. This intelligence immediately fanned the flame of war afresh; the despatch of troops was prevented by the strife between the Ministry and the Gironde, which, instead of sending aid to the Whites, restored, the political equality of the Mulattoes. Both courses were equally unavailing, and the conflagration, once kindled, raged

on. Then arose complaints from the whole commercial world; in the maritime towns bankruptcies followed one another in quick succession. Sugar rose in Paris to nearly double the usual price, and the mob of the Faubourg St. Antoine began to plunder the warehouses, and to demand a fixed price for sugar; and having once commenced proceedings of this kind, for bread also. The calm which had reigned in the city since 17th July, was at an end; the mass of the Proletaries was once more set in motion, and the Gironde took care to keep up the agitation.

They had foreseen the declaration of war, and knew how intimately it was connected with internal commotions, and they therefore determined to have a force ready for the occasion. The miseries of St. Domingo were terrible enough to have admonished them to peace and unity, but theirs was not the kind of patriotism which would have enabled them to make some sacrifice of their system and their ambition to the interests of their country. When Paris had resounded for eight days with the uproar of the suburbs, Brissot and his friends had no other thought, than that the storm would rage still more furiously when the men of the suburbs stood opposed in arms to the National Guard. The electioneering Club in the Episcopal Palace, which had brought Brissot into the Chamber, declared that if the musket was the weapon of the enfranchised citizens, the pike must be the arm of the People. The journals of the party took up the cry, and Péthion complained that the Bourgeoisie, whose alliance with the People had brought about the 14th of July, had proved faithless to the sacred popular cause. The fabrication of pikes began, and many thousands were soon in the hands of the non-voters. Two deputations from St. Antoine, which appeared in quick succession at the bar of the National Assembly, declared the object of their arming in the plainest terms. They wished, said they, on the 26th of January, for a law which secured property, but annihilated *accaparement* (the buying up of goods) and usury. This was the well-known for-

mula for an official and compulsory price of goods." Guard well the Tuileries," said the same party on the 15th of February—"the Lion will soon awake; we are ready to purge the earth of the friends of the King and to force the King himself to cease from deceiving us." A short time before Narbonne had sent the old French Guards to the frontier, as a regiment of the line, to the great sorrow of the Revolutionists, who, with all their pike enthusiasm, were very sorry to see these gallant champions march away. The Jacobins were continually discussing the necessity of their return, and the beforementioned deputation declared that the Pikes and the Guards would save the country.

They founded still greater hopes on the south of the kingdom. We must say a few words more in this place about Avignon, and a second festival of horror, by which the first days of the legislative Assembly were desecrated.

This old residence of the Popes remained until the year 1789 under the papal Government, which, from its distance, exercised its authority with great mildness, and left the towns and villages of the country in the enjoyment of a great degree of independence. The general condition of the population was, however, much the same as in the neighbouring districts of France—agitation in the towns and misery in the country. It is not surprising, therefore, that the commotion of Aug. 4th should extend itself among the subjects of the Holy see. Here too castles were burned, black mail levied on the monasteries, tithes and feudal rights abolished. The city of Avignon soon became the centre of a political agitation, whose first object was to throw off the papal yoke, and then to unite the country with France. The old constitution of the city was abolished, a Municipality established after the French pattern, and the chief offices in which were filled exclusively by partisans of France. The middle class of citizens, animated by hatred against the Nobility and Clergy, took the lead in this movement; but they met with great resistance in the country districts. Carpentras, the second town

of the country remained true to the Pope,—perhaps out of neighbourly opposition to Avignon,—and to this place resorted a mixed multitude of Nobles, Monks, and Peasants. Both towns of course entered into correspondence, respectively, with men of similar sentiments in France. As early as Nov. 1789, the Left brought forward the question of the reunion of Avignon with the French Empire in the National Assembly. But in this case, as in the previous one respecting the Colonies, the Chamber could arrive at no decision; they rather feared to resort to open violence, and nevertheless felt an irresistible longing to appropriate the Papal territory. In June 1790, the people of Avignon tore down the Papal arms, and the Town Council sent a message to Paris that Avignon wished to be united to France. But even then the decision was delayed. In consequence of the representations of the Papal Nuncio himself, Mirabeau obtained a decree for the entrance of some French regiments into Avignon, for the maintenance of order. La Marck wrote to him, at that time, that he was thereby sending the plague to Avignon; and in fact, no sooner had the French troops arrived in that city than the greater part of them deserted, and marched out with the Democrats of the town to take and sack the little town of Cavaillon, which remained faithful to the Pope. From this time forward civil war raged without intermission. Avignon, immediately after the taking of Cavaillon, summoned a meeting of Electors from all the *Communes* of the country, and when Carpentras refused to recognise its authority, an armed band, increased by French reinforcements to 6000 men, marched against the town to subdue the Papists with fire and sword. The unfortunate inhabitants of the district were unable to protect their lands;—their villages were set on fire, their fields laid waste, and their forests destroyed. But the town itself, filled with exiles and desperate men, held out with unshaken firmness; and when the peasants of the neighbouring mountains, a bold and hardy race of men, incensed by the savage brutality of the Bandits of Vaucluse,—for so

the Democratic Army called itself—rose at last to relieve the place, the terrified besiegers were in serious danger. But just at this crisis the Government Commissioners arrived from France, and succeeded in bringing about a truce, a preliminary arrangement of differences, and the return of the bandits to Avignon. Thereupon the Constituent Assembly, on the 14th of September, 1791, decreed the reunion of the country with France. Before the new government could assert its authority, fresh and more dreadful atrocities had taken place. The Town-Council of Avignon could no longer control the powers which they had themselves let loose. The Electoral Assembly had promised the bandits two francs daily pay, besides maintenance and arms—a heavy burden for the city, and one which soon made them wish to disband this dangerous gang. But this was not at all that the leaders of the bandits wanted; they therefore took possession of the Papal Castle, which from a lofty rock looks down on the city and the Valley of the Rhone, and at that time served the triple purpose of palace, citadel, and arsenal. From this point they commanded the town at will; dragged the Members of the Town-Council to their dungeons, plundered the public treasury, and murdered all who offered any resistance. At length the patience of the people was exhausted. As one of the Members of the Electoral Assembly, Lescuyer, was about to carry off the funds of the public loan-office, an insurrection took place in which he was killed. At the same time intelligence arrived that new Commissioners with French troops were approaching. The bandits saw the end of their rule and the punishment of their crimes at hand, and therefore determined at the last moment to avenge Lescuyer, and rid themselves of the principal witnesses of their crimes. On the 16th of October they murdered their prisoners to the number of 110, and among them a priest and a woman in a state of pregnancy. A boy of sixteen slew seven of the victims with his own hand; their bodies were hacked in pieces, and the bleeding limbs thrown

into a dungeon of the Castle, called *la Glacière* that they might be for ever hidden from human eyes. The knowledge of the deed, however, was not to be thus concealed; the whole population came forward as accusers, and the Commissioners ordered the immediate apprehension of the ringleaders. The country rose with one accord against the friends of the murderous crew, and expelled nearly 2000 of these patriots from the city. But these were no times in which justice could obtain a hearing in opposition to party; the *banditti* of Avignon were as serviceable for a fresh Revolution as Parisian pikes and French guards, and in every quarter the French Democracy took up their cause.

The inland towns and nearly the whole province of Provence were actuated by the same sentiments as Avignon itself. In the summer of 1789 they had joined with enthusiasm in the Revolution against the *ancien régime;* but they soon became thoroughly weary of the never-ending disturbances, after having seen the real character of the second Revolution displayed in attacks on the Church and the property and lives of individuals. The sharper the schism in the body of the Church itself—the fiercer the struggle in the neighbouring city of Avignon—the more closely and firmly did the more moderate men hold together. In Mende, Vannes and Jalés, associations of armed men were formed to protect the Catholic Priests from the Jacobins; the citizens of Arles, by long continued efforts, got the mastery over the Democrats; and in consideration of the disturbed condition of the country, took up their residence in some old fortresses from which they could command the Rhone, and, if necessary, block up the river. They were not guilty of any illegal act; on the contrary, the political excitement in Arles was caused by the efforts of the Jacobins in the Town to put a stop to usury, and to the buying up of goods—by which they always meant maintaining by force the nominal value of paper money, and fixing the price of wares

at their pleasure. The public authorities of the Department agreed entirely with the citizens.[1]

These moderate views were violently opposed by the Democrats of the South, who were in possession of the crowded and bustling city of Marseilles, the focus of their power. They had elected a Municipality in accordance with their views, and could also reckon on the support of the majority of the 21 batallions of the Burgher Guard. Into this wealthy seat of commerce a crowd of the most excitable of the people daily thronged—French and Catalan mariners, smugglers and adventurers from all quarters of the world. The extensive works in the harbour employed some thousands of men, and the regular traffic led all the peasants of the neighbourhood to and from the city. "There are 20,000 people here," said Barbaroux (at that time secretary of the Town Council), "and just as many characters and views." Opportunities of agitation were never wanting; sometimes reactionary attempts were made by Officers, Nobles and Priests; at others, reports were spread of Emigrant conspiracies, and tumultuous risings of the people, who did not like to lose on their *assignats*, and wished to buy cheap bread. In short there was an ever-flowing, ever widening whirlpool, which gradually drew the whole Province into its vortex. The Municipal Government submissively assented to the wishes of the masses—*e. g.* they caused manifestoes to be printed at an expense (for one year) of 21,000 francs[2]—but in other respects they acted with sovereign authority,—formed alliances with neighbouring Communities—opened diplomatic negociations with Corsica—took the direction of the commercial settlements in Africa and the Levant,—and

[1] Charges brought by the Marseillois against Arles: "The Directory has an understanding with the rebels, and favours stock-jobbing and the *accaparement*. — [2] This item recurs in all the city budgets of this period with similar amounts; *e. g.* for Orleans 8000 francs; Lottin, I. 304. If we take the whole kingdom, this class of unproductive expenditure must have swallowed millions.

allowed no interference either from the Departmental Authorities or the Ministry at Paris. As early as the beginning of the year, they began to look with suspicion on Arles and Avignon, and reflected on the consequences which must arise, if these cities were to ally themselves with Sardinia and the Emigrés. On the 4th of February therefore they dispatched Barbaroux to Paris, to denounce the alleged[1] warlike preparations which Arles was making against Marseilles—the counter-revolutionary movements of the Departments,—and the tyranny of the usurers and *accapareurs*. Barbaroux, a handsome young man, of great gallantry, ardent imagination, and fond of excitement and tumult, immediately formed a close intimacy with Brissot, and became an enthusiastic admirer of the equally restless and ambitious Madame Roland. Montpellier and Orange as well as Marseilles supported his demands, and as Arles refused to unite with them, they began, on their own authority, to form free companies for its attack, in which they enrolled National guards, armed proletaries, natives and strangers. The same charges were brought against Avignon as against Arles and the whole province, of being in a state of insurrection, and conspiring with the Emigrés.

Similar disturbances were reported to the National Assembly from every part of France; and now the impotence of the Government, the wretched condition of all civil and religious affairs, and the power of the Jacobins, were clearly brought to light. There was scarcely a town in France in which these last had not a Club, affiliated to the great Central Association in Paris. The Jacobins themselves estimated their own numbers at 400,000 men,[2] most of them needy men, incapable of an independent opinion, and placed by the Constitution of the Club at the entire disposal of its

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[1] General Barbantane, who three weeks later proved his revolutionary sentiments at Aix, calls the warlike preparations of Arles mere child's play.

[2] J. M. Chenier, *Monit.* 1792, p. 711.

Parisian leaders. Not that the disorders of which we are about to speak were all planned and ordered beforehand by the club in Paris. Circumstances made this quite superfluous; since there were in every village the same occasions for religious disputes—everywhere the same losses by the *assignats*,—the same desire of cheap bread,—the same contempt for magistrates and laws. But the Clubs continually transmitted the general order to rouse or to calm the masses of the people, according to the immediate necessity of the Chiefs of the party. They gave to each separate section of Jacobins the inspiring confidence, that similar operations were going on elsewhere, and that they were backed by a countless number of associates of like opinion with themselves. And in return they enabled their chiefs immediately to turn to account, in the great centre of the kingdom, any local disturbance in the Provinces. On the 11th of February of this year the signal was given, for reasons already stated, to increase the ferment among the people. Brissot and the Gironde were agreed in this particular with Robespierre and Danton, just as in the question of war they had enjoyed the support of Lafayette and Narbonne. That, on the other hand, Robespierre was angry with them on account of the war, and Lafayette on account of the internal commotions, gave them little concern, in the midst of these successful alliances with other parties, by which the latter, for the time at least, seemed only to serve their purposes.

The causes of agitation were every where the same. These were no longer, as in 1789, the feudal rights of the Nobles, nor even, as in 1793, the fear of Foreign Powers; and we now see clearly that the alarm respecting the Emigrés was got up by the chiefs of parties for their own purposes, and was only really felt in some of the border districts. In the interior it was solely by religious and social questions that men's minds were agitated; and the abolition of the Church, and the maintenance of the people at the cost of the State, were the objects of almost every disturbance. The *assignats*,

of which at this time 1600 millions, and soon afterwards 1800 millions, were in circulation—after about 400 millions had been burned—had driven the silver coinage entirely out of currency; and even copper, in spite of the melting down of the church bells, was hardly to be met with. The value of paper money had fallen terribly since the beginning of the cry for war; and even on the small five-franc notes there was a loss in Paris of 40 per cent. and in other towns of 60 per cent.; so that the rate of exchange, which usually only troubles men of property, was a source of perpetual torment to the poorest workman. The National Assembly, however, had no other source of income for State purposes than fresh issues of paper money; and they were therefore really very glad that the breach with the Emigrés had become irreconcilable, because it afforded them a pretext for new confiscations, which filled their coffers and furnished a fund on the security of which the *assignats* were issued. On the 9th of February they decreed that all the landed estates of the Emigrés should be sequestrated, and administered for the good of the Public. These landed estates made up a mass of property already greater than that of the Church, and its confiscation had for a long time been eagerly desired by the Democrats. But as this measure did not raise the value of the *assignats* a single *sou*, the people profited but little, in spite of all the jubilation of the terrorists. The demand for specie became louder and more threatening every day; it was no longer safe even for the Government to transport specie from one place to another, because the infuriated populace immediately suspected that it was being sent out of the country. Whenever a tradesman refused to receive paper money for his wares,—or, still worse, when a man of business tried to collect a quantity of coin,—a tumult was the immediate consequence, and the cry was raised "*à la lanterne*" with the usurers!

The bread riots were intimately connected with the state of things described above. Prices rose as the value of the

assignats declined; the people were afraid of being starved, and every where actually suffered much from want, though still more from the fear of it. There was still abundance of employment to be got in the manufactories, as the effect of the low rate of exchange still continued. When there was a deficiency of work, the National Assembly voted more millions for the establishment of public workshops. The recruiting of the army, which was very zealously carried on, offered a tolerable livelihood for the moment to more than a 100,000 men. Nor was there a want of corn, and wherever a real deficiency should arise, the State could supply, the market, having bought up a stock for 12 million francs in the first 3 months of the year, and subsequently set apart 10 million francs for a similar purpose. But in this case, too, the unruly temper of the people spoiled and ruined everything. The recruiting went on very slowly, much as they talked of patriotic enthusiasm. The manufacturer had the greatest trouble in bringing workmen together in sufficient numbers, and the public workshops had lost all credit even in the eyes of the people. They had in fact no taste for work or discipline; they much preferred listening to Marat's imprecations on the hardhearted rich, or to read in the most widely circulated of all the Parisian journals, that the superfluity of the wealthy is taken from the poor man's portion, and is therefore a theft—a theft worthy of punishment in a society of equals. With these doctrines were interspersed continual exhortations to incarcerate all noblemen, and to divide their goods among the poor; to lodge the Priests in isolated buildings like those who are stricken with the plague; "since, unfortunately, it was impossible to banish them, because no country would receive such vermin;"—and lastly, to compel the King to hear in silence, and the Minister to obey with reverence, the commands of the sovereign People! Such declamations were the very breath of life to the Jacobins, who sent them down into the Provinces and repeated them in every part of the country. And as

their effect was greatly increased by the want and misery of the great mass of the people, there was no need of any special conspiracies to evoke a similar communistic violence in every part of the kingdom.

The trade in corn was completely ruined. The populace murdered the merchants, whom they regarded as usurers, and stopped all the corn transports. On one of these occasions at Noyon, a report arose that troops were on the march to quell the disturbance. The alarm was spread through 140 Parishes, and the peasants collected to the number of 300,000 to prevent the removal of the bread. The intelligence was brought to the National Assembly, and the Left began at first to make flattering excuses for the rioters. But as soon as it became known that the supply of corn was intended for Paris itself, a force was immediately despatched in good earnest, and the mere sight of the troops put an end to the disturbance. In other places the military refused to act, or even joined the insurgents; and in the Departments du Nord and Pas de Calais, there was a revolt on every market day. In Normandy armed bands of 6,000 to 8,000 men marched from town to town, put their own value on goods, and obliged the owners to sell them. In Melun, the alarm bells were heard from all the villages round about. The citizens barricaded the gates of the towns, carried stones and boiling water on to the roofs of the houses, and waited for the attack. The Magistrates of different places, having no effectual union with one another, or with the central Government, differed very much in the course which they pursued. The Mayor of Etampes allowed himself to be cut down by a gang of bandits, rather than grant the tarif of prices to which they demanded his assent. In other places the Magistrates of the *Communes* were at the head of the rioters, while the Governers of the Departments were mostly on the side of law and order. The loose and unpractical nature of the new Government was every where conspicuously brought to light. "Our greatest misfortune," says Vau-

blanc, "is, that the Magistrates of the *Communes* are in a state of open insubordination to the Departmental authorities."

The cup of misery was filled to the brim by religious dissensions. The Minister of the Interior was Cahier de Gerville, once a member of the Town Council of Paris, a friend of Barnave and Chapelier, a man of rude and blustering manners. He was a Republican at heart, but after having taken the oaths, he was honestly bent on upholding the laws. He held pretty nearly the same views as Mirabeau respecting the Church. All Christianity appeared to him superstition, which however, he thought, every man had a right to respect. When the Princess Elisabeth, on one occasion, begged his protection for a persecuted *Religieuse,* he answered curtly that a Minister had more important things than nuns to care for; and he urgently begged the National Assembly to provide that the words Church and Priests should never again be heard within its walls. This very man reports, on 15th February, that the freedom of worship was violated in all the Departments; that the Authorities had issued vexatious ordinances—had caused children to be taken away from their Parents, and ordered the dead to be exhumed, because non-juring Priests had performed the rite of baptism or burial; and that several churches had been closed, on the pretext that the Priests were inclined to rebellion. From this official statement, against which the Left had not a word to say, it cannot be doubted which party were the aggressors in the church question, even in the year 1792. This was further shewn when the Minister earnestly desired that a law should be passed, to transfer the registers to lay authorities, that these legal affairs might be withdrawn from the influence of religious disputes and scruples of conscience. They allowed him to press this matter on their attention in vain for months, and threw every possible difficulty in the way, and only agreed to it at last on Guadet's remarking that the law was a good one in itself, and that afterwards, if the Constitutional Clergy should gain strength, its enact-

ment might be hindered by them. Just as they rejoiced in the obstinacy of the Emigrés, because it enabled them to confiscate their lands, they now wished for a continuance of the schism in the Church, that they might obtain the right of banishing the Priests. Some of the Departmental Governments had already, on their own authority, proceeded to expel them from their customary residence, or to imprison them without previous trial. The Town Council of Lyons—which had already put a fixed price on bread, and arbitrarily ordered houses to be searched to discover false *assignats*—placed the Monasteries under the special supervision of the Police, and destroyed the coats of arms on the Church doors.

We cannot be surprised that persecution of this kind should excite resistance. When the Church was closed the Parish Priest performed the service in the gloom of the forest, far away from all human habitations; the peasants flocked to their ministrations from a distance of many miles, and returned to their villages with anything but enthusiasm for the Revolution. On the River Aisne eighteen parishes drove out their constitutional clergy, and could only be reduced to submission by the arrival of strong detachments of troops of the line. On the Dordogne, and in the *Hautes Pyrénées*, no candidate could get himself elected who was not supported by the Orthodox Priests. And, lastly, in the Department of the Lozère the deprived Archbishop Castellane escaped to his castle of Chenac in the mountains, where the good catholics collected around him, fortified the place, and occupied it with a considerable garrison. This was closely connected with a rising in Mende and Jalès, of which we have spoken above; and at no great distance were Arles and Avignon, whose determination to resist the tyranny of the Democracy grew daily stronger. These were the districts against which Barbaroux was operating in Paris, and the Town Council raising forces in Marseilles. In this latter city the revolutionary leaders were indignant that the National Assembly had come to no decision, and were preparing

at last to act independently of its orders. In Aix, on the road to Arles, a Swiss Regiment was stationed, whose trustworthiness was well known by experience in Marseilles, to whose garrison it had formerly belonged. Fearing that on their way towards Arles they might be exposed to danger from these troops, the Marseillois first marched against Aix on the 28th February, with 4,000 men and six guns. No one in that town was expecting an attack; the Town Council feared for the life of the citizens in case of a collision; and the Colonel of the Swiss regiment, being summoned to surrender by his superior, General Barbantane himself, was not willing to lead his men to fruitless slaughter; and in short, the troops laid down their arms, and retired from the town without a blow. The Marseillois were contented with this first success, and returned home; but their enterprise produced a powerful impression in Paris; for it opened the eyes of both the Court and the Republicans to the fact, that there was an army in the South ready for action, and only waiting for the signal.

It was evident enough that such a state of suspense and ferment could not last much longer. The Ministers had no means of effectual interference; the constitution deprived them of the legal authority, and the insubordination of the troops, of the material power, requisite for the suppression of disturbances. Yet the Gironde did not fail to impute this inaction of the Ministers to a systematic endeavour to disgust the people with the Revolution, by prolonging the disorders which accompanied it. It would have been easy enough to retort this reproach on the National Assembly itself, since Gerville proved that since the month of October, he had brought forward more than 200 bills of importance to the performance of his functions, none of which he had succeeded in passing. The Minister of Marine affairs, Bertrand, was in the same case; and Narbonne himself reminded the Assembly, on the 16th February, that 21 bills were still in arrear, without which it was simply impossible either to

equip the army or carry on the war. The Ministers too were divided among themselves, and there were hardly two who held the same opinions.[1] Bertrand, as an avowed Royalist, kept aloof from the rest. His manner towards the Assembly was abrupt and cool, and he pleased no one but the Court. He was constantly carrying on intrigues in the city, and proved himself a steady, able, but not always trustworthy man. Tarbé the Minister of Finance, brave and honest, and a thorough man of business, but insignificant as a Statesman, formed a close alliance with Delessart, and like him was chiefly guided by Barnave and the Lameths. They agreed that all further delay was impossible, and they now reverted to the plans of Mirabeau, which their leaders had formerly opposed with such jealous fury. They thought the time was come when the nation, wearied to death, might be induced to send up petitions from all the Departments for the dissolution of the incapable Assembly,—a measure which they thought that a portion of the Assembly itself might be induced to support. They hoped that they should then be able to convey the King to some stronghold in the interior, where, with the assistance of an Assembly of Notables appointed by himself, he could draw up a new constitution on the system of two Chambers.[2] Bertrand had no further objection to the plan than its inadequateness for the object in view. Gerville, and Duport, the Minister of Justice, though they set a some what higher value on the existing Constitution, were ready under present circumstances to give their consent to the scheme. The domestic troubles, already endured so long, might perhaps have been borne a little longer, but the complication of the foreign questions would not allow of a moment's delay. The only expedient against war, by which all would be lost, was to break up the majority in the National Assembly; and to effect this was the main difficulty of their scheme. Narbonne indeed was, after

[1] Pellenc to La Marck, 3. Jan. 1792. [2] *Mallet du Pan*, I. 295, 432.

all, a member of the Council; might they hope that he, and of course Lafayette, would take an entirely new direction? This seemed less impossible just now; for Lafayette was enraged by the internal commotions, which were by no means favourable to warlike preparations, and had always advocated the formation of an Elective Senate; and Narbonne was attacked, with ever-increasing fury, by Robespierre's section of the Jacobins; and on several occasion was made painfully aware of the decline of his popularity. At all events there could be no hope of success without the Minister at War, and they said that they must either remove him from his post, which seemed a dangerous step, or admit him to their councils, which, at any rate in the first stages of their scheme, might be done without risk.

And in fact, about the middle of the month he expressed his readiness to join them. They came to the resolution to enter into relations with a number of well-disposed Deputies, and to form, what as yet had no existence, a regularly constituted Ministerial party.[1] On the 23rd, one of these Deputies, Mouysset, proposed in the name of 300 independent Members, that on the evenings when the Assembly did not sit, their Chamber should be opened to the Deputies for free discussion and explanations. The Gironde immediately saw the scope of this proposition. They feared that a parliamentary union might then be formed, which would be independent of, and intimately hostile to, the Clubs, and they, therefore, used all the means in their power of nipping the project in the bud. The debates became stormy; insulting imputations were mingled with loud threats; the galleries stormed above with unchecked shouts and cheers. At last the courage of the moderate party fell, and Muysset withdrew his motion. And thus the first scheme was entirely frustrated.

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[1] Bertrand, Vol. 7, ch. 11. His statements, however, concerning time and persons are erroneous. Talleyrand's despatch to Narbonne, Feb. 21: "*Enfin vous vous unissez tous: voilà une bonne nouvelle.*"

Lafayette, however, was still so greatly enraged with the Jacobins, that he determined, in conjunction with Narbonne and Madame de Stael, to take the restoration of the throne into his own hands. Madame de Stael proposed to carry off the Royal family in her own carriage; whereupon the King was to repair to Lafayette's camp, and put himself—(under Lafayette's guidance, of course) at the head of the army. From what we know of Lafayette we may be sure that nothing satisfactory would have resulted from this plan, the outline of which was as loose and quixotic as Narbonne's entire system. The Queen, too, was from the very first averse to the undertaking, and when Bertrand and Delessart heard of it, they had no difficulty in procuring its rejection.[1]

Though the adoption of this plan would probably not have served the royal cause, yet its rejection was fatal alike to Louis XVI. and the Feuillants. The recent wound which had been inflicted on the sensitive pride of Lafayette made him forget his former anger, and his union with the Gironde became closer, and his hatred against the Lameths and their friends more bitter than ever. The catastrophe was accelerated by the new turn which foreign affairs had taken.

Despatches had been received from Vienna and from London; of which the former were calculated to increase the exasperation of the war party in France, and the latter to raise their hopes and courage; and both, therefore, tended to bring matters to a final decision.

As to Austria, Leopold had clung with his usual tenacity to his former views, notwithstanding the late successes of the Gironde. Himself desirous of peace, he still held to the conviction that the Feuillants must eventually triumph, and, supported by the influence of the Powers, effect a bloodless reform of the constitution. In accordance with these views, he repeatedly exhorted the Spiritual Electors to pru-

[1] Mallet, I. 258.

dence; and even the 6,000 men whom he destined for the Breisgau received no other instructions than to put an energetic check on the machinations of the Emigrés.[1] The sharp note of the 25th January, which peremptorily demanded of him an entire change of system, did, indeed embarrass him for the moment; it seemed, he said, as if the French, who called him "the Peaceful," must be made to see another side of his character. But he soon fell back on the system of the Feuillants, and resumed his hope that the French would yield as soon as united Europe had sent them an energetic warning. The zeal of the Gironde, therefore, only served to quicken his diplomatic efforts to bring about the —as he supposed—decisive Coalition of the Powers, before the Gironde had carried their point, and war had been declared.

He had just succeeded in inducing Prussia to sign a definitive treaty of alliance with himself on the 7th of February. We shall endeavour, farther on, to set before the reader, the course of German politics, in a more connected manner. It is enough for the present to remark, that even in this treaty the Emperor remained true to his former principles—regarding it as solely one of mutual defence—holding out a prospect of a European concert;—and purposing to aid the Constitutional party in France, as well as Poland. It was altogether in this spirit that the reply of the 17th of February to the decree of the 25th of January was drawn up. The Austrian Government first expressed its astonishment at the displeasure caused by the orders given to General Bender, since an official declaration had been sent at the same time both from Brussels and Treves, that Bender was to protect Treves, only on the condition, that the Emigrés in that Electorate were disarmed and dispersed. With regard to the Concert of the Powers, he said that since the

[2] Dispatches of the Dutch Minister von Haeften of the 4th, 14th, 16th, 25th Jan., 8th Feb., and 10th March.

acceptance of the Constitution, it only had a prospective existence; but that it was a matter of duty to allow it to continue, as long as a republican faction was threatening Leopold's royal ally, and preparing by extensive armaments, and active agitation, to revolutionise the whole of Europe. The note went on to say, that the Emperor wished for peace, and that while France was arming, he had disarmed the Emigrés, and exhorted the other Powers to peace;—that it was the Jacobins alone who tried to kindle a war, because they saw in it the only means of rousing the people to a pitch of fanaticism favourable to their views;—that Austria was thereby forced to take defensive measures but still hoped that the reasonable majority of the French people would not doubt his real sentiments, but liberate themselves from the delusions in which the Jacobins had endeavoured to entangle them.

Words like these could not but raise the passions of Lafayette and the Gironde to a still higher pitch; their proud sharp tone was music to the ears of Brissot, who did not fail to turn them to his own purposes. Delessart brought the Austrian despatch before the Assembly on 1st March, and announced that in his reply, after repelling the Emperor's criticisms on the internal condition, and the party divisions, of France, he had expressed his pleasure at the peaceful assurances contained in the Emperor's note, and called on him, since he denied all hostile feeling towards the Constitution, to dissolve a Coalition which had now no object. The Assembly applauded these happy retorts, and referred the note to the Diplomatic Committee; but Delessart soon found that there was no longer any place for him, the Minister of peace, upon this burning battle-field.

At the same time Talleyrand sent home reports of his operations in London: he had, at first, met with rather a cool reception, which did not become warmer when his companion Biron was arrested for debt, and he himself had excited the suspicions of the Ministry by his frequent inter-

course with Fox, Sheridan and other members of the opposition.[1] Still there were some points in his favour; the wish of all the leading men in England was for a long continuance of peace, which Pitt, especially, required to carry out his great financial operations. George III., indeed, hated the Revolution with all the obstinacy of his character, but in the country there were many admirers of young France, and no one could foretell what the decision of the great mass of the Nation would be, should a *casus belli* arise. Nor was the Ministry as unanimous as it appeared to be. The Premier could reckon on his personal friend Dundas and his cousin Grenville; opposed to these was Thurlow, who was just as self-willed as Pitt was arbitrary, and who had for many years entertained a strong personal enmity against the Prime Minister. It was to these men that Talleyrand made his proposal that the two countries, recognising the identity of their interests, should mutually guarantee each other's possessions both in and out of Europe:—he saw that this agreement was the utmost that could be attained, and that no formal alliance between the two countries could be hoped for. In his opinion, however, such a guarantee, exchanged under present circumstances, must virtually break up the Austro-European Concert. There was indeed much in the proposition that was alluring to England. Ireland was in a state of ferment, and a dangerous war with Tippoo Sahib was in progress:—it would therefore be no small gain to England, to secure itself from French hostility in these two quarters. The question remained undecided in the Cabinet during 14 days. At the end of that, time on the 2nd of March, Grenville announced to the French Envoy, that England was by no means to be counted amongst the

[1] Morris's *Journal*, I. 365: "Montmorin told me on 16. Jan. that Talleyrand was quite sure of being able to oust Pitt."—Morris to Washington, April 4th: "I have taken warning by Talleyrand, and held no intercourse with the leaders of the Opposition."

enemies of France, but, on the contrary, wished, for her own sake, that the French people should be satisfied. "Pitt and I," said Grenville, "well know that a commercial nation can only gain by the freedom of its neighbours;" "but," he added, "no answer can be returned to Talleyrand's other propositions. The French Envoy thought himself justified by the tenor of this conference in reporting to Narbonne, that Pitt aimed at a *rapprochement* to France, but that the Chancellor, and above all the King, were opposed to it: that, therefore, although the English Cabinet had resolved to return an evasive answer, he believed that Pitt would undertake nothing against the French, even should they attack Belgium. It was true, he said, that England had in 1790 guaranteed the Belgian sovereignty to the Emperor, but she had not bound herself to protect that country from transient military occupation, or other accidents of war.[1]

Narbonne considered that he had gained much by this assurance. In the Crisis into which the French Cabinet was thrown by the resolutions of the other Ministers, he had once more summoned the three Generals to Paris, to support himself by their influence and advice. Once more momentous events might be influenced by the decisions of Lafayette, and once more he really decided in favour of destruction. Enraged at Bertrand's opposition to his plans for saving the Royal family, and inspired by new hopes from England, he encouraged Narbonne to continue his present course, to adhere to his warlike policy, and rigorously to oppose his colleagues. Lafayette undertook to announce to the Council, on the 3rd of March, that Narbonne could no longer serve

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[1] All this information is taken from Talleyrand's despatches to Narbonne. These papers had also their revolutionary history. At the time of Delessart's trial they were sent to the Court of Justice at Orleans; remained there—when the Tribunal was broken up by the September murders—unnoticed among other documents, and were discovered a few years ago as waste paper.

the State as colleague of Bertrand, the enemy of the Constitution. Expostulations and offers were in vain, because Lafayette and his party hoped to place Narbonne at the head of a Ministry entirely amenable to their will. On the 6th of March, Narbonne declared to the Assembly, in the name of the Generals, that no one should be allowed to meddle with the Constitution; that though it was a terrible thing to throw the country into a war, it was, on the other hand, a despicable thing to represent war as an impossibility, in order to curtail freedom; that the well-known integrity of the King gave every one a right to expect that he would not only require from his Ministers the upholding of the Constitution, but the practical carrying out of its principles, and the removal of all obstructions. It is difficult to say whether the suspicion, thus covertly expressed, attached to the King or to his Ministers; but the Girondists spoke out more clearly the same evening by the mouth of a certain Gonchon,[1] a half crazy citizen of St. Antoine, who, in the name of that Faubourg, called on the Assembly to decree the compulsory acceptance of the *assignats* at their full value, and to annihilate all conspirators—urging that it was more profitable to serve the People than Kings—for that "Courtiers, Kings and Ministers would pass away," but "the people and the pikes would never pass away."

Under these circumstances, Delessart and the Lamèths were of opinion[2] that Narbonne could remain Minister no longer; the remainder of the Cabinet thought the same, but proposed, to soften matters, that the royalist Bertrand should retire likewise. Pending these deliberations, the Journals published letters from the three Generals to Narbonne, in which they expressed their regret that he should resign, as he was indispensable to both Army and Country.

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[1] That he was now, and long afterwards, a tool of the Gironde is shown in Gadoul's report. *Vid.* Buchez, XXVIII. — [2] La Marck to Mercy, March 11th.

By these means the crisis was made public, and a universal excitement was caused. The King, too, offended by the interference of his Army in political questions, hesitated no longer, and announced to Narbonne in a few words that he had appointed Col de Graves as War Minister in his stead, and summoned the Generals to the palace to answer for their letters. Luckner said that Narbonne had been such a convenient Minister; and Lafayette affirmed that the letters were published without his knowledge; but, after the audience, he angrily told the Minister of Justice, that "it should soon be seen who had the greatest power in the kingdom—himself or the King."[1]

It was the most unfortunate moment which Delessart could have chosen for a ministerial change, for it seemed as if all the quarters of the globe were conspiring to add weight to the blow impending over his head. On the 8th, news arrived at Paris that the Spanish Minister, Florida Blanca, had fallen into disgrace, and had been succeeded by Aranda, who was believed to hold political opinions similar to those of Lafayette and to entertain a decided hostility to England. Spain therefore was looked upon as entirely lost to the Austrian Concert.—In the next place there was a report that Russia was endeavouring to persuade Prussia to act against the Poles—that Generals and Ministers were at variance on this subject in Berlin—and that the interest felt in Leopold's views respecting France was already on the wane; and lastly, on the 9th, came the astounding intelligence of the Emperor Leopold's death, after an illness of only four days—an event which scattered all existing plans to the winds and deprived the European Coalition of its very soul. Leopold's heir, Francis, a weak young man, 22 years of age, had not yet been declared Emperor; and Austria was supposed to be entirely isolated by the neutrality of England, which, according to Talleyrand's report, might be safely

[1] Pellenc to La Marck.

relied on. The Parisian public now believed in the continuance of peace, and the Funds rose 15 per cent; but Brissot and Lafayette only saw in this turn of affairs, by which Delessart was left friendless and helpless, a more favourable opportunity of attacking Austria. They therefore determined to use it to take signal vengeance for the dismissal of Narbonne from the Cabinet, by seizing for themselves the reins of power to complete the breach with Austria.

No speech was ever more malicious, violent, and devoid of argument,[1] than the one delivered by Brissot, on March 10th, in which he discussed the despatches between Austria and Delessart, in order to found upon them a charge of high treason against that Minister. For, however much the latter may, in his heart, have been inclined to the Austrian Coalition, the notes in question contained nothing but what the National Assembly had itself decreed; and that which would generally have been regarded as the duty, and redounded to the credit, of a Minister—*viz.*, making extensive demands in gentle terms, in order not to give unnecessary offence—was now branded as a crime against the honour and safety of the State. No Committee was called on to report, nor was the accused allowed to say a word in his own defence; the allied factions of Brissot and Lafayette made up the whole Assembly. But when some members of the Right characterized the criminal impeachment as too strong a measure, and wished to limit the proceedings to the overthrow of the Minister by a direct vote of censure—then the most splendid orator of the Gironde, Vergniaud, rose to place the *gentleness* of his party in full view, by opening out a vista of future deeds of violence. Mirabeau,

[1] Brissot confessed to Dumont, that the Minister would certainly be acquitted since, there was no evidence against him; but he said that the position of affairs rendered the impeachment necessary, in order to remove him from the Ministry; it would not do to let the Jacobins get the start of them. Dumont, *Mémoires sur Mirabeau*, XIX. 378.

in his contest with the Priests, had once reminded his hearers of that St. Bartholomew's night, in which fanatics had armed the hand of Charles IX. against his people. On this occasion Vergniaud cried, "I too see the window of that Palace in which conspiracy is laying its snares to lead us through the anarchy of civil war to the chains of slavery. Often in the olden times has Terror issued forth from that Palace in the name of Despotism; let that same Terror now return to it in the name of the Law: let it be clearly known that the King alone in that Palace is inviolable, and that every other head is subject to the sword of Justice!"

It was thus the Girondists roused the Queen, by threats of the scaffold, from the tears she was shedding over the grave of her Brother, in whom, though so far away, had lain her only hope of safety. They little knew how busily they were erecting that same scaffold for themselves as well as their victims! When Vergniaud had finished speaking, every idea of opposition was overwhelmed by thunders of never-ending applause,—the impeachment of Delessart was passed by an immense majority, and his arrest carried into effect that very evening.—The Ministry was overthrown,—where were its successors to be sought for?

We frequently read two different statements respecting the formation of the new Cabinet. According to one of these, the Gironde dictated the list of Ministers, with the threat that, in case of its non-acceptance, they would impeach the Queen.[1] But when we look closely into the course of events, we shall find no trace of this, except in the speech of Vergniaud. According to the other statement, the King had made up his mind, that he must keep his friends for better times, and meanwhile choose his Ministers—according to Constitutional usage—from the ranks of the majority.

[1] This was Robespierre's version of the affair at that time; Beaulieu, II. 247. As there was no further mention made of such an impeachment, the suspicion arose, that the Gironde, having risen to power, became accomplices in crimes which they had once theatened to prosecute.

But in such times, the strict forms of the Constitutional tournament can no longer be observed. In a question of life and death, we surround ourselves with defenders—when we can!

But Louis could no longer do so, and this was the simple reason of the formation of a Democratic Ministry. He was without protectors, without weapons; his guard was not yet organised, and his troops were as much in the hands of the enemy as the bandits of the Faubourgs. The National Assembly held the supreme power, its leaders ordered the appointment of the Ministers, and needed no longer to employ threats for the attainment of their ends. "The King," writes one of his confidential friends[1] at this period, "lives like a man who is preparing for death." Had the Girondists gained the victory of the 10th unaided, the Government of Louis would have ended at once, and the Gironde would have formed a Regency for Louis XVII.[2] But they had conquered by the help of Lafayette, and the General was still a power with which they must keep on good terms. In Paris he had as many partisans amongst the National Guard, as the Gironde among the Pikemen; and out of the capital he was backed by the army, or, at any rate, both he and the Girondists believed this to be the case. Lafayette, however, in spite of his republican tendencies, had committed himself too thoroughly to the whole constitution, and saw too clearly that any alteration of it under present circumstances would only give the Gironde the victory over himself, to allow of the removal of Louis from the throne. The change of Ministers was all that the Gironde could effect for the present; but in regard to the members of the new cabinet they carried their point against Lafayette in the case of every office.

Even the new Minister at War, de Graves, whom Delessart had appointed, and who had been recommended to him

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[1] Pellenc. — [2] Mallet, I. 260. Beauchamp also mentions it.

as a friend of Narbonne, was closely connected with the Gironde by means of Péthion and Gensonné. Of more importance was the next nomination to the Ministry of Foreign affairs, for which Lafayette proposed Barthélemy, French ambassador in Switzerland, a man of republican opinions, but of weak and irresolute character. For the Home affairs he wished to introduce his friend Baron Dietrich, Mayor of Strasburg, who upheld his cause against the Priestly and Jacobin party in Alsace—and had just presented him with a pocket edition of the "Rights of man" for the seduction of the Austrian soldiers. But the Girondists, at Gensonné's suggestion, had directed their attention to General Dumouriez, whom they considered as one of themselves, and to whom Lafayette could make no special objection, as he had already himself employed him as his agent in Brussels. By this means one of the most considerable agents of the Revolution was brought on to the great theatre of political life. Dûmouriez forthwith decided the nomination to the post of Minister of Marine affairs in favour of Lacoste, a man devoted to himself, but otherwise possessed of small capacity. The remaining appointments were filled up more slowly, as Dumouriez took no step without having previously consulted with Brissot and Péthion. It was not until the 28th that they agreed in offering the Ministry of Justice to Narbonne's friend Garnier, and as a set-off against this, the Home Ministry and that of Finance were given to two thorough-paced Girondists—Roland and Clavière. But as Garnier declined the post offered to him, it finally fell to the lot of a Bourdeaux lawyer, Duranthon, recommended by Vergniaud and Guadet.[1]

Such was the progress made by the Girondist faction at the seat of Government and the course of events in the provinces corresponded exactly to the crisis of affairs in the

[1] Besides this man, Robert, Louvet and Collot d'Herbois were also talked of.

Capital. On the 12th of March, a friend of Barbaroux, Rebequi, set out for Marseilles with 4,000 men, and 6 pieces of artillery to quell the counter-revolution in Arles—regardless of the protestations of the Public authorities, and the prospect of a civil war. It soon, however, became evident that the expected resistance of the citizens of Arles had been greatly over-estimated, and the Marseillois entered the town without opposition, and disarmed the weak force of National Guards. Almost on the same day repeated charges were brought forward in the National Assembly against Avignon, Mende and Jalès, and decrees were passed in quick succession to confirm the occupation of Arles by the Marseillois, and to carry out the disarming of the whole department of the Lozêre.

On the other hand they restored the weapons of the Glacière to the Bandits of Vaucluse, by proclaiming a general amnesty for all political offences, and entrusting the Departments of Marseilles and du Gard with the reestablishment of order, instead of the Royal Commission. Marseilles appointed for this office the leaders of the force which had occupied Arles—Rebequi and Bertier,—who immediately despatched a troop of their followers to Avignon, liberated Jourdan with a portion of his Bandits and other criminals, and immediately afterwards held a triumphal entry, in their company, into Avignon. From that time forward gloom and terror brooded over the miserable city. "This time," cried Jourdan, "the ice-house shall be filled:" and many thousands of the inhabitants prepared to leave the place. The republican Revolution reigned throughout the South of the Kingdom, and had a well-equipped and victorious army at its disposal. Lyons, the second city in the land, moreover, was entirely in the hands of the Democrats. The Council of the Commune was filled by the friends of Roland. Vitet, the Mayor, kept up a confidential correspondence with him; ruled over the city by means of the Jacobin Club, and had just succeeded in carrying the election of a brave Sansculotte, the

silkweaver Juillard, as Commander-in-Chief of the Civic Guard; while a Gascon Priest, named Laussel, roused the artisans of the great manufacturing town to enthusiasm by a journal, at the head of which was the motto: "The Lord hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich he hath sent empty away." Another ex-priest from Piedmont, Challier, was already declaiming, in imitation of Robespierre, against the lukewarmness of the Girondists, and demanding the annihilation of the moneyed men, who were striving to erect a new aristocracy on the ruins of the old Nobility. It was to no purpose that the Departmental Council suspended him for ordering illegal imprisonments and house-searchings, the fury of the Democratic mob firmly upheld him in his office. The Mayor Vitet himself went at this time to Montpellier, to enter into relations with the leaders of the Marseillois; and it was commonly reported that the Revolutionary army, strengthened by all the kindred elements of the country, was about to march upon the capital.

As the Girondists, however, had fought their way into the Ministry, this extreme measure was for the present deferred. Roland even declared the liberation of the Bandits in Avignon illegal; whereupon Robespierre openly accused him to the Jacobins of treason; but Roland was not very much in earnest with his protest, and his friends soon afterwards quashed the complaints of the people of Avignon by moving the order of the day.

CHAPTER III.

GIRONDIST MINISTRY.

General Dumouriez.—Declaration of war against Austria.—Plans against Sardinia.—Failure of the attack on Belgium.—Lafayette breaks with the Ministry.—Crisis in French manufactures.—National bankruptcy.—Fresh attacks of the Gironde on the King.—Indignation of Dumouriez and the Parisian citizens.—Dissolution of the Ministry.

By far the most important person in the new Ministry was the Minister for Foreign affairs, General Dumouriez. Like Sieyès and Mirabeau, he came from Provence, and belonged to a respectable family of the *Noblesse de Robe* of that country. His Father, however, in consequence of his irritable and unaccomodating character, rose no higher than the office of War Commissary, and his ambitious and pleasure-loving son was thrown at an early age on his own resources. At the age of 18 he served in the army against Frederick the Great, and by his conduct in three campaigns, gained for himself the cross of St. Louis and the rank of Captain. But the peace soon put an end to his hopes of farther advancement; his regiment was broken up, and he himself dismissed with a small pension. His affection for a young kinswoman, with whose parents his own were at variance, caused a quarrel between him and his father. Impelled by the triple force of poverty, passion and ambition, he collected the remnant of his worldly possessions, and with a hundred louisd'or in his pocket, set out to seek his fortune in the world. Choiseul, who was at that time at the head of the Ministry, gave him permission to send in a report of his exploits, which established for him a firm footing in the in-

triguing cabal at that time calling itself the French government. This was slippery ground for any man, but especially dangerous for one without name or connection like Dumouriez. But he had the genuine spirit of a soldier, to whom danger is a pleasant excitement. He understood the right moment for shewing himself audacious and proud, or supple and submissive,—and above all, adroit and useful. He was not restrained by any of the higher principles of action; his only conviction in politics and morality was, that a mistake was worse than a crime, and that in his position any vulgar breach of law would be the worst of mistakes. Thus his life passed away in many-coloured vicissitudes. First employed in a very dubious office in the Corsican troubles of 1766, he afterwards acted as secret agent of the French Minister in Spain and Portugal, and afterwards in Hungary and Poland—where he had made great progress in the organization of the war on a grand scale against Russia, when the fall of Choiseul put an end to his operations, and called him back to Paris. The new Minister Aiguillon was unfavourable to him, but he considered himself fully recompensed for this, by the favour of Count Broglie, who served the King as private adviser, behind Aiguillon's back. Dumouriez, however, soon learned how little reliance could be placed on the King, who, at the Minister's behest, allowed him to be consigned to a long imprisonment. In 1775 his persecution came at last to an end; he was made Commandant of Cherbourg, with the rank of Major-general, in which post he remained till the breaking out of the Revolution.

To live away from Paris seemed to Dumouriez a sufficiently hard fate; his mind found no rest in the narrowness of provincial life, and he was continually besieging the Ministers with plans, reports and projects. In all his efforts his aspirations were directed, less to the trappings than the realities of power—towards influence, activity, and knowledge. He wished to enjoy life, but would have been also contented with a moderate reward; and would have easily consoled

himself, even had his name remained unknown. His ambition was to rule, to influence and to guide men—to make his will felt in the policy of France. In this mood of mind, the Revolution overtook him. Without a moment's hesitation, his path was chosen; his whole life had been a struggle against the privileges of noble birth; the time was now come for personal power and merit, and Dumouriez, threw himself zealously into the movement. His greatest efforts were spent in revolutionising the soldiers. In the organisation of the Civic Guard at Cherbourg he took a personal part, and quickly acquired a democratic reputation throughout the Province. In Paris he was introduced to Mirabeau and Lafayette, and was entrusted by the latter with a mission to Belgium, where he formed a lasting connection with the Democrats. Backed by a number of old acquaintances he at last obtained influence with the Ministry itself. Louis XVI. alone could not endure him, and continually refused to promote him—saying he knew that intriguer well, and that his employers would pay dearly for his support. In 1791 he was sent as Commander-in-chief of the Lower Loire to Nantes; distinguished himself by rigid patriotism on the occasion of the King's flight, and became acquainted with Gensonné, when the latter was commissioned in August to inquire into the religious troubles of La Vendée. Two months afterwards he offered his services to the King as Minister, and promised a complete extermination of the Jacobins.[1] When rejected by Louis, he kept up his connection with the Girondists by means of Gensonné, and was summoned by that faction to Paris in February 1792; and on the fall of Delessart was introduced by them into the Ministry. Dumouriez was at this time 53 years old, but had all the liveliness and impetuosity of the youngest man; and he resolved to take his own course and make an epoch in the Revolution.

[1] Morris to Washington, March 21st.

He entirely sympathised in the war policy of the Gironde, and was really the first to reduce it to system and method, to give it definite objects, and calculate the requisite and possible means of compassing its ends. "You will not only have a war," he had previously said to Delessart, "with Austria, but a general European war; it shall, however, only end in bringing us glory, profit and extended dominion." It was he who first uttered the words "natural boundaries" of the Alps and Rhine (words full of fate to the Revolution), and founded on them his whole system of warlike operations —*viz. defence* where these natural boundaries were already in possession, as in Alsace; and *attack*, where they had first to be acquired by conquest. The latter was the case in Belgium, Liége, and the Rhenish Electorate, in the North; and in the South, in the Duchy of Savoy, which was ill affected towards its Sardinian Rulers. In the latter country, as well as in Belgium and on the Rhine, numerous connections were kept up with the people; and little doubt was felt that an insurrection would break out as soon as French troops should shew themselves. With this expectation Lafayette was to march by Namur towards Liége and Brussels; Luckner, starting for Strasburg, was to proceed by way of Landau to operate against Mayence; and a fourth army would be raised in the South to attack Savoy. Dumouriez, who knew as well as Biron himself, by his former adventures, the weak and evil side of every Court, had strong hopes of keeping England neutral, and severing Prussia from the Austrian Alliance. It seemed to the whole party impossible that Prussia, against which the Austro-French Alliance of 1756 had been formed, should really take part in a war against renovated France—a war which had its origin in the renunciation of that very alliance. The death of Leopold seemed to afford fresh chances, and the French Government made new overtures to Prussia, and offered it through the younger Custine, a French-Polish alliance, and, as a recompense, the hegemony of Germany, and perhaps the imperial Crown,

which had just fallen vacant.[1] But should these expectations fail, (and they were really in every respect inconsistent with the actual state of things), Dumouriez thought that, if the worst came to the worst, he should have conquered Belgium, and organised an armed insurrection in that country, long before the German armies could arrive. Under this impression he resumed the interchange of diplomatic notes with Austria, couched in the rudest terms, in order to bring on a declaration of war with the least possible delay.

Very little was needed to effect this object, since the breach was virtually completed by the decree of January 25th. On the Austrian side, the young King Francis had declared for war as early as 1791; and the already declining influence of Prince Kaunitz (who was the personification in Vienna of the Alliance between Austria and France against Prussia), had now completely sunk below the political horizon. The Austrian Cabinet being so disposed, there could no longer be any question of further concessions, which the well-known tendencies of the Gironde were of themselves sufficient to render in every respect foolish and unavailing. But Francis was still too new to business, and too distrustful of himself and others, to allow of any immediate change in the peaceful policy of Leopold. Accordingly the Vice-chancellor Cobenzl, who retained his former influence, repeated in his note of March 18th the representations of his previous despatch of the 17th of February, expressed in exactly the same words, for his reply to which Delessart had been first applauded and then impeached. "It is fortunate for you," said the Elector of Mayence, on this occasion, to the Emigrés, "that the French themselves declare war, or you would long for it in vain."[2] Dumouriez once more replied with the categorical demand that the Emperor should disarm, and likewise break off his alliance with Prussia. Cobenzl

[1] Condorcet's *Revision des travaux de l'Assemblée legislative. Oeuvres X. 442.*

[2] Bouillé.

replied that this should be done as soon as France had given compensation for her illegal acts against the Alsatian Princes and the Pope; and had established a state of things at home by which the safety of Europe was no longer imperilled. The means of fulfilling the latter condition, he added, the French themselves should take into consideration.[1] Austria therefore still maintained the precise position it had taken up in December, without taking a single step towards aggression. Whereupon, Dumouriez, however insufficient might seem the grounds for doing so, resolved to propose to the National Assembly a declaration of war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia.

By the middle of April he had had time to become in some degree acquainted with the *agrémens* which surround the position of a Minister, in a period of Revolution. It is true that the National Assembly applauded all his official Reports, which he knew how to flavour with all the energy of *civisme*. The majority, even amongst the Jacobins, whom he once visited in the red cap of liberty, was still favourable to him. But he was soon himself convinced that the existing means of carrying on a serious war were utterly insufficient. Narbonne had taken his measures in the most brilliant, but frivolous and superficial manner. All his reports had been made with a view to the applause of the gallery, rather than in accordance with facts. On every side there was want of men and officers, discipline and materials. The Minister at War, de Graves, who placed himself at the disposal of Dumouriez, did his best; but unfortunately the home policy of the Girondists, on whom in other respects he was obliged to lean, rendered all progress impossible. The foremost condition of successful warfare—the discipline

[1] So runs the note itself. Dumouriez says, that Austria had designated the Royal declaration of the 23d of June 1789 as the basis of the future constitution. We shall presently see (B. IV. ch. 1) how far the views of the Austrian Ministry agreed with this; at any rate no note to this effect has been found.

of the army—after innumerable blows, now received its death stroke from the National Assembly, who, after repeated demands from the Jacobins, ordered the liberation of the Swiss regiment Chateauvieux, which had been condemned to the galleys for the bloody mutiny of Nancy. This gave the Parisian Democrats the opportunity of getting up a tumultuous popular festival in honour of the liberated criminals, who were represented as martyrs for liberty.[1] The more active this kind of agitation became, the greater was the number of officers who emigrated, the more unruly did the soldiers become, the fewer the troops that could he spared from home service, and the more completely were all the channels of administration blocked up. It soon appeared, moreover, that Dumouriez was too independent to suit the taste of his party. Mad. Roland was angry with his not very refined manners, with his ridicule of her officiousness, and affectation of playing the part of a great man. For the present they were mutually necessary to each other, but there was no real agreement in their views; Dumouriez hardly concealed his opinion that the King was better than any of them.

Under these circumstances, it was natural he should seek to renew his old connexion with Lafayette, who had returned to his head-quarters in Metz full of wrath at the manner in which the Ministerial appointments had been filled up, and therefore more inclined to wage war with the Jacobins than with Austria. Dumouriez wrote to him three times, confirmed the arrangement made under Narbonne, that the chief blow should be dealt in Belgium by Lafayette, and

[1] The red Phrygian cap, which had been assumed since the beginning of the Revolution as the symbol of freedom, and worn as such by Dumouriez, first gained general and lasting popularity at the festival of April 15th. The galley-slaves wore a red woollen cap, and the *fête'd* Swiss had also brought it with them from the *bagno*. *Conf.* Poisson, *L'armée et la garde nationale*, I, 370. Mortimer-Ternaux, *Hist. de la Terreur*, Vol. II. c. 1.

strengthened him—in spite of the complaints of the other Generals—by a Division of the Army of the North.[1] In reply came a semi-official note from Lafayette, expressing his desire that measures should be taken for the reestablishment of order, and for the restoration of civil and religious freedom; and he promised, on these conditions, to support the Ministry. At the same time, in a private letter to Dumouriez, he complained of the exclusive party spirit which prevailed, and the unruly eagerness displayed for the commencement of war. Dumouriez replied that he was *not* so inclined; that the date at which war had been decided on, was previous to the formation of the present Ministry. Still more strongly did he deprecate the imputation of party spirit; and expressed his conviction, that Lafayette and himself stood in need of mutual assistance. In accordance with these sentiments he defended the General in the debate of the Cabinet against the Girondists, who, feeling themselves now certain of war, and wishing to be reconciled to Robespierre, were willing to sacrifice to him his detested opponent Lafayette. Dumouriez opposed their machinations with all his power, yet Lafayette maintained his reserve; and as his feelings were no secret to the Ministers, they were seriously alarmed for the fate of the motion on the question of war in the Assembly, till now so enthusiastic in its favour. As late as the 18th April, when instructions for assuming the offensive had been already sent off to the Generals, Dumouriez wrote to his old friend Biron, that the question of peace and war was before the Assembly, and that should the decision be for peace, nothing would be left for them all but to emigrate to America. But it soon appeared that with Lafayette the thought was not very quickly followed by the deed; and although his own desire for war was cooled, he made no attempt to influence his party; so that when, on the 20th of April, the King with a heavy heart fulfilled

[1] Unpublished correspondence in the military archives at Paris.

the commands of his Ministry, and brought forward the motion for war with Austria, two or three voices only were raised warning the Assembly to prudence. All the rest were in one tumult of joy and feverish impatience. No delay, not even for the report of a Committee, or for printing the proposal, was allowed, and war against Bohemia and Hungary was unanimously decreed. Every thing had been prepared on the frontiers, that the lightning flash might be immediately followed by the thunders of war.

The Democrats of Marseilles had already begged for Montesquiou as Commander-in-chief for the South, and his having been at variance with Lameth and Lafayette, from the time of the Constituent Assembly, seemed to offer a sufficient guarantee to the Gironde.[1] He was now on his way to Lyons in order to place 30,000 men on the very borders of Savoy, and to prepare them for a rapid inroad as soon as a pretext offered; and this was quickly found. On the 19th of April, the Sardinian Commandant of Alexandria refused to receive the newly appointed French Chargé d'Affaires, Sémonville, on the ground that he had not been officially announced, and that he was known as a dangerous agitator. Both charges were true, for Sardinia belonged to the so-called kindred Courts, at which those ceremonies still obtained. Sémonville had once been a tool of Lafayette and afterwards of Mirabeau, in the secret police of Paris: subsequently he had cooperated with the Democrats of Liége as *Chargé d'Affaires* in that city; and lastly, when resident in Genoa, had used his utmost efforts to further the same cause in Italy. Notwithstanding these facts, Dumouriez demanded express satisfaction for this insulting violation of international law; and when this was not forthcoming, Montesquiou received instructions to occupy Savoy on the 15th of May.[2]

Rochambeau and Lafayette had received orders, five days

[1] Barbaroux's *Mémoires*. — [2] Correspondence of the Army of the South.

before the declaration of war, to place their men under canvas, that Lafayette, in the very beginning of May, might lead 30,000 men from Dun in forced marches to Givet and Namur; and that as soon as this movement had commenced, Rochambeau might begin his march with 22,000 men by way of Mons towards Brussels. But neither the political nor military views of Rochambeau were agreeable to Dumouriez or the Gironde; and after an interval of eight days, a second order was issued, that he should himself remain with the rear-guard at Valenciennes, and send General Biron in his stead with 12,000 men against Mons; and that further, for the purpose of misleading the Austrians, he should despatch two small detachments towards Tournay and Furnes, and begin his attack on the 29th of April at latest. Lafayette was instructed, in like manner, to be at Givet by the 30th, and to March upon Namur by the 1st of May.[1] Dumouriez, with his own hand, wrote to urge him to lose no time; reminded him of the anger of the Jacobins, which he must disarm by brilliant successes—of the weakness of the Austrians—and of the importance of the results which must ensue if he reached Namur and Liége by forced marches, and called the Belgians to arms. "I shall count the minutes," he said, "till I receive intelligence from you."

Intelligence arrived only two quickly from all quarters, and more disastrous than any one could have expected.

Rochambeau was bitterly chagrined on receiving the second despatch of the 22nd, and the more so as it was accompanied by sealed orders for the two Generals under his

[1] The whole difference between the instructions of the 15th and the 22nd consisted therefore in this, that according to the former, the attack was to be made in the first week of May and according to the latter on the 30th of April at latest. As the general plan had been known to the commanders for months, and, as far as regarded Namur, had been drawn up by themselves, the difference appears insignificant. When Lafayette and Rochambeau ascribe their failure to this discrepancy, it only shows their wish to throw the blame of it on the Ministry.

command. But as a man of honour he did his best, in the eight short days which were left, to furnish Biron with every assistance in his power, although believing him to be the real author and instigator of the whole arrangement. Deficient as was the equipment of the Army, there was sufficient material to place 12,000 men in the field; and with this force Biron was able to cross the frontier on the 29th, while Theobald Dillon marched with 3,500 from Lille towards Tournay; and Carles with 1,200 men from Dunkirk towards Furnes. Dillon, by marching through the night, arrived on Belgian ground on the morning of the 29th; and halted a league from Tournay, that his men might breakfast. He himself felt great uncertainty as to his position and chances of success, and told the captain who led the vanguard that he feared a surprise, and should like to beat an immediate retreat. Nevertheless he remained under cover of some hills, without sending forward any outposts to reconnoitre in his front. The Cavalry were just unbridling their horses to feed them, when the enemy appeared in sight, in about equal numbers, on the flank of their position, led by Colonels Pforzheim and Vogelsang, who, with three batallions and six squadrons, were marching against the French.[1] Although the Austrians at first only brought a few field pieces, and the *Chevaux-légers*, into action, the greatest terror seized on Dillon's forces; and when the Austrian infantry shewed itself, he instantly sounded a retreat. This was carried out at first in tolerable order—the Austrians pursuing *tambour battant* but without firing; when suddenly the French Cuirassiers and the rest of the cavalry broke their lines, riding over the infantry with wild cries of "*Sauve qui peut!*" and the whole mass rolled in tumultuous confusion towards Lille. The Austrians only pursued to the frontier, and did not lose a man; the French lost four guns, a quantity of baggage and *two* men! The tumult continued to rage in the

[1] *Austrian Military Journal*, 1812, I. 16.

town of Lille itself; the soldiers raised the cry of treachery, in which the mob joined; the officers were fired on by both soldiers and populace, and Dillon, with two other Generals, were ruthlessly butchered.

Meanwhile Biron, on the 29th, had occupied Quiévrain, the nearest border town of Belgium, without opposition, and marched from that place upon Mons in three columns. A little skirmishing between the outposts took place, but did not cause much delay; and by the afternoon Biron had reached the heights above Mons, where the Austrian general Beaulieu had entrenched himself with only 3,500 men, but in a strong position. Here Biron halted, having no certain knowledge of the strength of the enemy, and feeling little confidence in his own troops. He was, moreover, surprised to see no signs of a Belgian revolution, and came at last, after a fruitless cannonade against the enemy's light troops, to the prudent determination to wait for news from Tournay. When these arrived in the evening, his courage fell; and it was only because the exhaustion of his troops rendered a night march impossible, that he postponed his retreat till the following morning. It never occurred to him that, since the Austrians had only 40,000 men under arms in all Belgium, he could not now be in the neighbourhood of a superior force to his own, and that Dillon's advance was only a feint, while he himself was leading the main attack. He seems to have forgotten, too, that Rochambeau with 6000 men was only a few leagues off, and that he might therefore reconnoitre the enemy's position without any danger. His uneasiness communicated itself to the troops, and disorders broke out in the middle of the night in two regiments of Dragoons, some of whom fled, but the majority remained at their posts.[1] Early on the following morning—after a short skirmish near Framerie,—Biron gave orders for a retreat, and his army reached Quiévrain without loss.[2] Here, however, a sudden

[1] A. N., 17th. May. Reports of the two Colonels. — [2] According to his own report. *Moniteur*, May 8th.

attack of the Austrian Hussars put to flight a battalion of National Guards. The disorder spread amongst the other regiments, and on the advance of the Austrian infantry, the whole French army fled back to Valenciennes without stopping, amidst cries of treachery. With infinite trouble Biron once more rallied a portion of his troops at Crespin, but no sooner did a patrol of Austrian Lancers shew themselves, than the French again fled in the wildest confusion, and three guns, seven waggons of amunition, and a hundred prisoners fell into the hands of the enemy. The loss of life in this precipitate flight was inconsiderable.[1]

During these occurrences Lafayette had united 10,000 men by forced marches at Givet between the 25th and 30th; and the rest of his army was in full march for the same place. His vanguard crossed the borders and occupied Bouvines. On the evening of his arrival at this place, he heard from Rochambeau of the retreat of Dillon and Biron. On the 1st of May came a letter from Biron himself, confirming the intelligence, and on the 2nd a despatch from the Minister at war expressing his alarm at Dillon's fate, and warning Lafayette to operate with the greatest circumspection, that no further failure might be incurred. Lafayette wished for nothing better than such an intimation, and remained motionless at Givet without attempting to reconnoitre.

Because, then, 3,000 men under Dillon had fled, Biron, in spite of his three-fold superiority in numbers, retreated. And because Biron had effected nothing, Lafayette with 30,000 men did not venture to set one foot into a country which could not possibly have brought a superior force against him. It we examine the course of events more closely, we shall find that the fault was not in the soldiers, who soon afterwards fought gallantly enough,—nor in their

[1] All this is taken from the official papers. In many accounts, the view of the matter is confused by erroneous ideas of what occurred in the Dragoon Regiments.

bad equipments, which in these first movements did not come into consideration,—but solely in the leaders, who engaged in the war with uncertainty and reluctance, were always calculating the power of the enemy instead of their own, and on all occasions set an example of timidity. The cry of treason, however, raised by the soldiers, and so violently taken up by the Clubs, and the parties in Paris, was by no means justified. No proofs of treachery have ever come to light, and the flight of the soldiers is sufficiently explained by their inexperience, their want of confidence in their officers, and their perception of a want of vigour on the part of their Generals. As to the charge of treason against the Generals themselves,—a want of courage and enterprise is not treachery, and the least consideration of their interests will incontrovertibly convince us that in Lafayette and Rochambeau, as well as in Biron and Dillon, treachery would have been an act of suicidal madness. On this point even the fanatical blindness of the party hatred of 1792 could hardly deceive itself. Just as futile is the charge brought by Lafayette against Dumouriez, of having prematurely hurried on the military operations merely to get rid of him, and of wishing that they should be unsuccessful. Had he not stake his political existence on the success of the attack, retained Lafayette in his command against the wishes of the Gironde, and made his own salvation dependent on the conduct of the General? He, too, was furious at the disgraceful issue, and in a confidential letter to his friend Biron gives vent to his feelings, saying, "You marched out like madmen and returned like fools."

The cup of bitterness was filled to overflowing, when, a few days afterwards, the intelligence arrived from General Montesquiou, that the Ministers were shamefully deceived by those who told them of the existence of an army in the South, that the military force in that part of the Kingdom was as scattered and ill provided, and as unprepared for

military operations, as in December; that no force could be raised in less time than two months, and that, therefore, a breach with Sardinia must at all costs be avoided.

Thus the hope of advancing to the Alps and the Rhine by a *coup de main* vanished into air, the position of the State was in the highest degree critical; for though Talleyrand had obtained from the English Government an express promise of neutrality—even though Belgium should be occupied—it was stipulated that Holland must be left untouched,[1] and any assistance from England was no longer to be hoped for. The younger Custine met with no better fortune on his mission to Berlin and Brunswick. On the contrary, there now appeared no doubt that Prussia would join Austria, and that in the course of a few months, a terrible collision might be expected. At this dreary prospect the courage of De Graves deserted him, he did not dare with empty coffers, mutinous soldiers, deserting officers and lukewarm Generals, to face the armies of Germany. On the 5th of May he sent in his resignation. His successor was a Girondist, Colonel Servan, a man of steadfast character, and an excellent officer; but as his sole idea was, that the feebleness of the Feuillants, and the treachery of the Court, had caused the present lamentable state of affairs, he was ready to enter with the greatest zeal into the work of his department and to promote any revolutionary movement at Paris. In the Council, therefore, he held firmly to Roland and Claviére, whilst Dumouriez became daily more and more estranged from them, and directed his attention exclusively to foreign affairs. His only thought was to resume the offensive as speedily as possible. Immediately after the disgrace at Mons, Rochambeau had thrown up his command, and Dumouriez had procured the nomination of the combative Luckner in his place; he also wrote to Lafayette, saying that he entirely agreed with his views on internal politics, entreating him to make a second

[1] Montmorin to La Marck, May 22d.

attack on Belgium within 14 days, and assuring him of every possible support from the Ministers; for in this particular the Gironde, in spite of their suspicions of Lafayette, were not slack. Servan raised double and triple the number of recruits, and the Assembly—to the great disgust of the Cordeliers, Robespierre[1] and Marat—passed a severe disciplinary law, and large quantities of stores were sent off to the camp. But in this case, as in every other, Lafayette was unable to rise above personal considerations, and the feelings of the moment; he did not trust Dumouriez, and was afraid of getting into a position of subordination to him. He despised the immorality of the man, who had always kept mistresses, always had friends of all parties, and always had money to spend without any visible source of income. In short, he would have nothing to say to such an alliance. In reply he complained more loudly than ever of the utter destitution of his army, which, he said, rendered all decisive action impossible; and he induced the weak Luckner to repeat these complaints in nearly the same words. His dreams of marching through Belgium and Holland as a triumphant Liberator were again dissipated, and he promised himself no better result of the war, than by a stout defence, to hold the Germans in check, and by a capitulation, to secure at once the "Rights of man" against the Emigrés, and the Constitution against the Jacobins.[2] The Month of May thus passed without any military movements, except some insignificant skirmishes between the outposts. The French armies remained weak and incapable of action, although the first four

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[1] Louis Blanc, VI. 384, cites from Robespierre's article the general theory, that the soldier should only be subject to military discipline for transgressions in military service, and lauds it as the best bulwark against military despotism. He does not mention, however, that the theory on this occasion had for its professed object, the prolongation of a military insubordination which had just exhibited itself in the shape of cowardice, mutiny, and murder. —
[2] Mallet's *Mémoires*, 14th July, sec. 2.

weeks of this campaign without battles had cost 52 million francs.[1]

This was the amount of the additional grant made to the Minister at War, in excess of the ordinary war budget. That far more was secretly spent was betrayed by Cambon on the 30th, when he mentioned "the 99 millions" which had been placed at the Minister's disposal. No more precise account has ever been furnished; but still worse than these immediate expenses were the subsequent effects of the war on the finances of the Country, yet the importance of its continuance for the development of the Revolution was even at that time apparent.

In the first place the mere declaration of war put an end to the artificial prosperity of French manufactures, which had formerly existed, and which we have formerly referred to, in describing the state of things in 1791. As early as December 16th a member exclaimed: "We are *selling* to foreign countries 50 per cent less than last year, and we are *buying* just as much more." "All our manufactories have come to a standstill," said another; "and every where foreigners are successfully competing with us." The most important branches —the woollen and cotton manufactories—suffered the most. The former had to procure the greater part, and the latter the whole, of its raw material from other countries. The woollen manufacturers suffered disadvantages in the purchase of their material from the unfavourable state of the exchange, and the cotton manufacturers from the ruined state of their chief source, St. Domingo; and both witnessed the deterioration of the home markets, and saw the consumption of their products daily decreasing. In February this question was brought before the National Assembly—a body already accustomed to interfere with private and commercial affairs, and who soon proposed a remedy for the case brought

[1] 20 millions granted in December, 25 on the 22d of April, and then 7 for every month from May on.

before them. The chief difficulty was to find the raw material. "Well then," said they, "let the owner be compelled to bring it into the manufactory." "We have been satisfied hitherto," said Tarbé, "with a moderate export duty on wool and cotton, but now that there is not enough for home consumption, the exportation of these materials must be simply forbidden." "The task before us" (such was the light in which Aréna placed the matter) "is to maintain 2 million workmen,[1] and to annihilate the nefarious speculators who buy up the wool for foreign countries, and by that means bring our manufactories to a standstill." In vain did Vaublanc and Emmercy raise their warning voices. The growth of wool in France had never been as considerable as the national resources of the soil would have admitted of; and sheep-feeding had up to that time formed the weakest side of French agriculture. It was certain, therefore, that for the sake of affording encouragement of doubtful utility to the manufactories, they would strike a heavy blow at agriculture, already so greatly depressed, by lessening the produce, and interfering with the markets of the sheep-owners. Nevertheless a decree was passed prohibiting the export of wool.

At the end of March the Committee on Trade complained that this prohibition had called into existence an infinite amount of smuggling, the continuance of which would expose the French to the danger of buying the produce of their own colonies from the English. The Committee, therefore, proposed in place of the prohibition an *ad valorem* export duty of 12 per cent. But the adherents of the politico-economical omnipotence of the State were not to be so easily satisfied. A zealous Democrat, named Duhem, demanded instead of the abrogation of the prohibition in question, the enactment of a new one—*viz.* of the exportation of wood, because it was too dear for the poor people,

[1] The speaker, like Cambon, is not particular to a cipher more or less.

and "the price," he said, "must be kept down for them." The case was in reality the same as with the wool, and the ultimate cause of the scarcity of both these articles was insufficient production, which was certainly not remedied by closing the existing markets against them. The prohibition of the export of wool, therefore, as well as a duty of 50 francs per cwt. on cotton—which was equivalent to a prohibition—remained in full force, and so did all the evils complained, of which were certainly not removed but increased by the prohibitory laws.

To mitigate the evil it would have been necessary to remove the causes from which it proceeded. Nor were these causes hidden from view, but unfortunately they formed an integral part of the revolutionary and warlike policy of the Gironde. As long as this remained the same, France was driven round the dreadful circle—of want increased by violence, and violence increased by want. Matters had gone so far in this direction, that a measure which Mirabeau a year and a half ago had considered worse than civil war, passed almost unobserved in the midst of the tumult and confusion.

Clavière, who had now the direction of the Finances of the State, had already come forward with a proposition to declare the State bankrupt. In earlier periods of the Revolution, when the property of the Church was confiscated to pay the State creditors with the funds thus raised, there would have been some sense in this proposition. But now the object was to pay the costs of a wantonly provoked war. It was feared, that if they continued to meet their obligations to the public creditor, Belgium could not be invaded, the Rhenish Provinces could not be revolutionised, nor the "natural boundaries" of the Empire conquered. In the face of such a danger it seemed impossible to hesitate. It was determined to keep, of course, the proceeds of the confiscated Church lands, but not to pay the creditors to whom those lands had been offered as security. On the

27th April, therefore, a bill was brought in for creating 300 millions of *assignats*, which, in defiance of previous enactments, were to be spent for war purposes alone, and not for the liquidation of the public debt. This measure was agreed to without any special debate. Ten days afterwards, it became known that the month of April had consumed 60 millions in paying the State debts. "At this rate," cried Jacob Dupont, "the National debt will swallow up all the *assignats*." Cambon observed that the war alone, by the end of the year, would cost 400 millions more than the whole annual revenue of the State. He added, moreover, that the suspension of the defrayment of the debt would only affect rich people, old financiers, bankers and speculators. It was therefore decreed, on the 15th of May, to suspend the payment of public debts for the present, with the exception of small claims under 10,000 francs.

A financial respite being thus obtained, the Girondists resumed their old revolutionary schemes. After they had established themselves in the Ministry, and Louis XVI. had shown himself compliant to their wishes, their attacks against the monarchy were for a while suspended. This truce might have still continued, perhaps, if the invasion of Belgium had succeeded, and common successes had warmed their hearts, and in some degree reconciled parties. But when the disaster of Tournay had given General Lafayette the desired opportunity of venting his wrath against the Gironde, and bringing all warlike operations to a standstill; and when Louis, little as he loved Lafayette, was unwilling to sacrifice him to the revolutionary parties; then it was that Brissot and Roland remembered that they had higher objects than the formation of a Constitutional Ministry. They knew that if Belgium were not occupied before the arrival of the German armies, the war would assume a very unfavourable aspect, and they were therefore in hot haste. Meanwhile, however, the Prussians were still far away, and all was quiet upon the German frontier; and therefore they were animated

by the liveliest audacity. We shall have, hereafter, to discuss the reasons of this dilatoriness on the part of the Germans; but even in this place we may remark that the consequences of their delay were incalculable. The Parisian populace, which in the winter had been greatly excited by innumerable stories of the dangers which threatened them from abroad, almost forgot, in their long continued security, the very existence of the foreign Powers. They talked of the war with the same careless curiosity, as of the battles of the English and Tippoo Sahib. Thus ended the hopes entertained by the Feuillants of intimidating the Democrats; and when, at a later period, the danger came upon the people unexpectedly, their thoughless levity quickly gave place to frantic terror and brutal fury.

Roland had been still more consistent than his colleagues in preserving the hostile attitude of his party towards the King. No sooner had he accepted office as Minister of the Interior, than the persecution of the ancient Church was carried on with increased severity. On the 6th April, the National Assembly abolished the corporations of the secular Clergy, and prohibited all ecclesiastic robes of office. When several Departments petitioned for the banishment of the Priests, Roland explained that, in fact, civil war could only be averted by severe measures of this kind; in consequence of which statement the "Committee of Public Safety" brought up a report on the 26th, that the Priests, being especially supported by the simplicity of the peasants, ought to be transplanted to the chief towns of the Departments. Dumouriez, to whom all these ecclesiastical squabbles were matters of indifference or dislike, checked this zeal for a time, and angrily rejected the suggestion that the King should be compelled to employ a constitutional confessor. But when the Gironde had gained another vote in the council of Ministers, by the accession of Servan, Roland came once more into the National Assembly to accelerate its resolutions respecting the Priests. Whatever view we may

take of the matter, there can be no doubt of the disloyalty with which Roland, in his capacity of Minister, attacked the most sensitive part of the Royal conscience,—kindled a contest for life and death between the King and the Assembly,—and remained in office that he might direct his ministerial influence, as long as possible, against his sovereign. He acted with so little reserve in this matter, as to set up a republican journal with the public money; and was not a little angry with Dumouriez, when the latter refused to sanction such an outlay. Mad. Roland praises the virtue of her husband in every page of her book; but it is evident that, though he may, perhaps, have been an excellent man in private intercourse, he did not scruple, as the chief of a party, to trample on the simplest rules of honour and integrity.

An entire abolition of the Monarchy, however, did not even now form part of the plan of the Girondist party. Sieyès and Condorcet still considered such a step extremely hazardous. They saw clearly that the greater the complication of present affairs, the more necessary it was to defer the final decision on the fate of the Monarchy to a later period. Generally speaking, their views were directed to a further curtailment of the Royal prerogatives, a reduction of the civil list, the appointment of the Ministry by the National Assembly, and lastly, under certain circumstances, a change in the person of the Monarch, or of the dynasty itself.[1] The former *beau ideal* of the Lameths—a monarchical constitution from which the monarch might, at pleasure be omitted—would thus have been completely realized.

The way towards this object was clearly marked out by circumstances. The first was the resuscitation of revolutionary passions; since now, throughout the length and breadth of the country, nothing was to be found but apathy and desire of repose. In Paris, more especially, every one turned

[1] *Mémoires* of Mallet du Pan, acc. to communications from Louis XVI.

his back on politics, and no one but the ever-ready mob of the Clubs, the "*Vainqueurs de la Bastille*"—the pikemen and the vagabonds—at most from 10,000 to 15,000—were prepared for an *émeute*. The war with Germany offered the best means of increasing the number of these unquiet spirits. The chief object of declaring war had been to enable the Gironde to accuse the King of treachery; now was the time to make this charge as loudly and distinctly as possible.

A second object was to render the King entirely defenceless in a military point of view. By means of Péthion, the Revolutionists already had the National Guard at their disposal, and by means of the Ministry the troops of the line. But the new body-guard of the King had lately entered on its duties. This force, personally bound to the King, and consisting, according to its muster roll, of 1800, but in reality of 6000, picked and well-tried men, was considered sufficient, in connection with some Swiss regiments in the neighbourhood, to inspire respect into the heroes of the barricades. The next step therefore was to do away with this constitutional Guard.

But in this way the Gironde could by no means be sure of keeping their booty to themselves. For, easy as it was to rouse the artisans and proletaries to rebellion, they could not reckon on their obedience after the victory. They knew that among such troops, Danton and Marat, the Cordéliers and Robespierre, were all-powerful; and from these they had been separated by the deadliest mutual hatred, ever since the agitation of the war question. It seemed therefore to the Gironde a matter of immediate moment to form another force, in addition to Lafayette's soldiers and Danton's pikemen, which should depend immediately on themselves. For the realisation of this object they reckoned principally on the South of the Kingdom, and especially on Provence, which was now completely under the power of the Marsoillois[1] and the banditti of Vaucluse. Here, too,

[1] Gorsas, Courier of June 13th, contains a Marseilles Correspondence of

they hoped that, in the last resort,—if the German armies should arrive more quickly than was expected,—they should find a secure and distant place of refuge, to which they might carry the King with them, and begin a new chapter of the revolutionary struggle under the protection of Jourdan and Barbaroux.

All these matters were discussed as early as the middle of May, a fortnight after the disasters of Tournay and Mons,[1] and put in operation, one after another, during the tedious debate on the subject of the Priests.

A journalist named Carra, an adherent of the Gironde, who had passed two years in prison (quite undeservedly, he said) for housebreaking, in his journal of the 15th accused an Austrian Committee in the Tuileries of being the originators of all the mischief. The former Ministers, Bertrand and Montmorin, were denounced as being members of it; the Queen, as an Austrian Princess, was said to be the leader of the conspiracy, which was to deliver France to the Austrian armies; and Count Mercy, who now lived at Brussels, was charged with being the mediator between Vienna and the Tuileries. This blow was intended to strike the Queen, and, through her the position of the King in the tenderest point. All the partisans of the Gironde, both near and distant, took up the calumny; Brissot and Gensonné brought it before the National Assembly. All the newspapers and Clubs repeated it with odious additions, and Mad. Roland herself had the base idea of composing a Ministerial rescript to the King himself, in which inuendos of this kind were corroborated by the sanction of the Council of Ministers. The Republican but conscientious Duranthon, Minister of justice, put a stop to this, by declaring that he considered it his duty, as a Minister of the crown, not to

June 5th, in which a letter of the Marseilles Jacobins to Péthion is communicated. They wish to come to Paris and defend liberty, until it has been secured by universal *confederation*. — [1] Montmorin to La Marck, May and June. Morris to Jefferson, 10th of June.

throw suspicion on the King, but to support him.[1] The story of the Austrian Committee, nevertheless, spread from party to party and from province to province, attached itself irrevocably to every movement of the Queen, and became the pretext for all the horrors of the following year. It becomes necessary, therefore, to make a few remarks on the actual truth of the report, although the accusers of the Queen spared themselves the trouble of bringing forward any proof whatever. We have already seen that the correspondence between the Queen and her brother Leopold, in the Summer and Autumn of 1791, contained nothing beyond the wish to avoid a war between France and Germany, and to deter the Jacobins by an imposing coalition of the European Powers, from destroying the constitution and the monarchy. The correspondence between the Queen and Mercy is exactly to the same effect; and there is not a single line in it which aims at the betrayal of French interests to Austria. It is true, indeed, that when the Gironde had attained their object, and commenced the war, with the avowed purpose of destroying the monarchical constitution, the Queen did send a note to Mercy, in which she revealed to him the warlike decree of the Ministerial Council, that the German Powers might take their measures betimes. But however blamable such an act would be in the ordinary and normal condition of a State, no unprejudiced person can in this case deny to the Queen the right of self-defence against the utterly illegal attacks of the Gironde. For the rest, we have not the slightest reason to believe that the Court received any advice from Bertrand.

Montmorin only ventured into the Palace for a few stealthy moments, and it was just in May and June that he announced to La Marck that the Royal family were without any advisers, and that they had no knowledge whatever of the intentions of the German Powers.[2] Of the attempts of

[1] *Mémoires de Roland, pieces justificatives.* — [2] May 22., June 19.

Louis at this period to recommend to Francis II. his views respecting the attitude of the Powers we shall speak in connection with the events of the war.

On the 19th of May, the same day on which Roland laid his letter before his colleagues, with the remark that if they refused their concurrence he would present it by himself alone, Lasource called on the National Assembly to rouse the People to its very depth, by a solemn declaration that the country was in danger; and that it was necessary above all things to collect a force near Paris, to protect the city from external and internal foes. The proposition came too early; the minds of the great majority of the Deputies were not yet prepared for it, and the address of Lasource suffered shipwreck on some subordinate question of finance. But a few days afterwards, the law respecting the Priests was completed, the barbarity of which rendered its rejection by the King certain; and the very prospect of that rejection was sufficient to raise a feeling in the majority hostile to Louis. According to this enactment, every Priest was to to take the civic oath. In case of refusal he might, on the motion of twenty citizens of the place where he lived, and the report of the District magistrates, be transported across the frontiers by the Governor of the Department, without further examination. Many a Deputy imagined that when once the decree was passed, the King would he obliged to sanction it; and that if it could not be managed in any other way, a little intimidation could do no harm. The Mayor, too, sent instructions to the Assembly to keep a watchful eye on any attempts at flight which might be undertaken by the King. The remembrance of Varennes made the blood of many a man boil in his veins, and his head whirl with excitement. Under these circumstances a trifling occurrence sufficed to raise a furious storm. The feelings of the Assembly had been powerfully excited by an address of the Minister at War, who demanded the equipment of 83,000 volunteers, in addition to the troops of the line, and for the second

time uttered in the Assembly the fatal words,—which resounded far and wide—that the whole nation must rise as one man. Immediately upon this the Committee of Public Safety reported that the Royal Porcelain manufactory at Sèvres had burned great bales of paper,—suspicious, very suspicious paper,—in which perhaps the correspondence of the Austrian Committee may have been contained. An investigation was made, great alarm prevailed in the capital, and the Assembly resolved to sit *en permanence*. It soon appeared, indeed, that the bales of paper had contained nothing but a libel on the Queen printed in London, which had been bought up at the expense of the civil list. But the excitement was not allayed, and the Assembly decreed, on the motion of Bazire, that the Royal Guard should be dissolved, on the ground that some legally ineligible persons were serving in it, that its numbers had been increased beyond the prescribed limit, and that it was animated by anti-revolutionary sentiments. The King was of opinion that these charges ought to have been followed up, and the guilty punished, and not made the pretext for depriving him of the Guard assigned to him by the Constitution. But when he was about to reject the decree, his Ministers all refused to put their signatures to his refusal. Threatened on all sides, and destitute of counsel and assistance, the Monarch ratified the order. The Guard was broken up, and their weapons were committed to the custody of the city authorities.[1] He now stood undefended in the midst of enemies, not knowing whether they only desired his crown, or were also thirsting for his blood.

Servan, the Minister at war, now took the last step. On the 4th of June, without any authority from the King, without consulting his colleagues—only Roland and Clavière were in the secret—he announced to the Assembly that the existing number of the armed force, and the means of re-

[1] Gorsas, *Courier*, June 2nd.

cruiting it were insufficient, and proposed that every Canton in the Kingdom should send five armed men to a festival of fraternity on the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille; and that after the festivities, this force—which would amount to 20,000 men—should encamp near Paris to protect the capital, and for that purpose should be put in possession of the cannon of the Parisian National Guard. This proposition was agreed to with little alteration, amid the applause of the galleries. In a short time, therefore, the Gironde saw themselves in possession of an army, strong enough either to control, or to overthrow the throne. The future fate of France seemed entirely in their hands.

No one could deceive himself with regard to the vast importance of this resolution. Men of all parties saw as clearly as the originator of the scheme himself, that the arms of these 20,000 men were not intended to be turned against an external enemy, but to serve the purposes of internal policy. The Jacobins and Cordéliers were jubilant. Robespierre alone, whose personal feud with Brissot had become more and more venomous, feared the increase of power which might accrue to his hated rivals, from the formation of a people's army. The rest regarded this as a remote danger; thought that they should agree very well with the *Fédérés* as men of like opinions, and rejoiced at the strengthening of their cause against the Monarchy. Lacroix, the friend of Danton, was already demanding at the club, the isolation of the "Austrian woman," the sale of the Emigrants' estates, a general arming of the People, and a progressive income tax. A citizen of the Faubourg St. Antoine added, amidst thunders of applause; "the people is sovereign, if its representatives fail in their duty, we ourselves will see what is to be done." Accordingly the fabrication and distribution of pikes was carried on at an accelerated rate. The second revolution, already announced by the Gironde, was ready to break out.

The Court and the Bourgeoisie were well aware of this.

The National Guard of Paris, which, since the 17th of July, knew but too well the bloodthirsty hatred of the proletaries, saw with mingled rage and terror the formation of a democratic army in opposition to themselves. They felt themselves dishonoured and imperilled; they did not for a moment doubt that the new camp would be exclusively filled with a Jacobin rabble, which would prepare for the capital the fate of Arles and Avignon. The plan of the Gironde, moreover, if the worst came to the worst, of carrying off the King to the South of France, was by no means a secret; and the citizens thought that they should in that case lose their sole protection against the pillage of foreign troops.[1] The majority of the battalions therefore held a meeting and agreed to make a grand demonstration. The Generals undertook the preparation of a memorial to the National Assembly against the summoning of the *Fédérés*, which quickly received thousands of signatures. The Feuillants entered into this movement with zeal and activity. Lafayette, full of rage against the Ministry, again joined the Feuillants party, and in alliance with them offered the King his aid against the attack of the Gironde. In the field Luckner had just undertaken a second attack on Belgium. "I have," he wrote to Servan, "neither troops or arms enough, but I am ready to take the offensive, if you wish me to do so before the arrival of the Prussians." The Ministry thereupon ordered an attack on Menin and Courtray, in support of which Lafayette was to advance to Maubeuge. When Luckner arrived at Menin he looked eagerly for a revolutionary outbreak on the part of the Belgians, but this did not take place; and Lafayette, in consequence of the intelligence he received from Paris, determined not to take any further steps against the Austrians, until he had settled matters with the Jacobins at home. It was in vain that Servan made another attempt at reconciliation, and despatched a

[1] Morris.

common friend into Lafayette's camp. When the latter, on the 15th June, informed the General of Servan's readiness to furnish him with all the means necessary for the conquest of Belgium, Lafayette's adjutant, with loud manifestations of joy, brought the news of the fall of the Girondist Ministers.

Louis XVI. was as fully aware as any one of the danger of his position. He had made up his mind for many weeks past to deprive his enemies of their ministerial power; and a split in the Cabinet itself gave him courage to take the decisive step. Dumouriez's relation to his colleagues had grown worse and worse. They blamed the irregularities of his private life, and he was offended at the surveillance exercised over him. They endeavoured to deprive him of his secret service money, since he would no longer spend it on republican newspapers; and he denounced them as perjured forgers, if they laid hands on the money which had once been granted to him. While they were angry with him for mercilessly ridiculing the foibles of the National Assembly, he, without any circumlocution, declared that it was unconscientious in them, as Ministers of the King, to undermine the throne. To the other causes of difference were added the military disasters, the responsibility for which they mutually, with ever-increasing heat, endeavoured to fasten on each other; and lastly the two decrees respecting the Priests and the *Fédérés* made the breach irreparable. Dumouriez did not even agree to the former of these measures, and with respect to the latter, he declared that Servan's mode of proceeding was unjustifiable, and the decree itself a source of certain and immediate destruction both to the King and the Gironde. The discussion in the Council was so warm, that the two Ministers were on the point of challenging each other. After the sitting Roland proposed to his colleagues to force the King to dismiss the General. But the latter had got the start of them, and in a secret conference with the King, undertook to make himself re-

sponsible for the dismissal of the three Girondists, and to form a new Ministry; Louis must however, he said, ratify the two decrees, and he would take care that, in the execution, they should become a dead letter. Dumouriez affirms that the King agreed to these conditions, while the Minister Bertrand maintains the contrary. The opposing statements of these two men are about equally worthy of credit, but we may easily imagine that in these hasty and excited negotiations some vague expression of the King may have inspired a hope in the mind of the General, which Louis, on his side, did not consider himself bound to fulfil. In this position of affairs Roland struck the final blow, by first presenting to the King the memorial which had been drawn up by his wife, and then laying it before the Council of Ministers. The fundamental proposition of this document—which was drawn up in a defiant tone, and with much circumlocution—was this: that it was, indeed, natural and conceivable for the King, in accordance with the prejudices of his education, to aim at Reaction, but that such attempts were, nevertheless, the cause of all the evils of the Revolution. After this personal attack, the King could hesitate no longer, and on the 13th, the three Girondists received their dismissal in a few short words. Dumouriez succeded Servan, and two of his personal friends received the *portfeuilles* of Roland and Clavière.

It was not difficult to foresee that such a step must have most important consequences. By such a declaration of war, all the revolutionary powers of France were roused to open enmity against the King. A terrible commotion was immediately raised in the National Assembly. Roland's letter was read amid clapping of hands; it was ordered to be printed, and sent into the Departments. The Clubs and journals bestirred themselves, and the Jacobins raised a storm in favour of the patriotic Ministers. Even Robespierre, much as he had grudged the Girondists their posts, could venture no more in the way of opposition than the utterance

of the epigram—that the existence of a treacherous Council of Ministers was perhaps a blessing, because it roused the Patriots to ever fresh distrust. In all other quarters, the revolutionary parties were entirely and zealously united. There was no doubt that a storm was brewing in Paris.

Dumouriez, whose rude audacity increased with the danger, had no intention of evading it. On the contrary, he entered the National Assembly in the midst of its excitement with cool and unshaken firmness, and read out a long and severe criticism on Servan's official conduct. He increased the exasperation of his opponents, but inspired at the same time no less fear than hatred, by his imperturbable confidence. They all crouched beneath his hand. "He is," cried Brissot, "the basest intriguer who ever lived;"—but they could find no place where to hit him; nay, they scarcely dared to show their hatred, because the former confidant of their plans could bring weapons against them which no one else possessed. Who shall decide whether under the circumstances it was possible for Dumouriez to succeed in the contest he had begun? The very first condition of success would have been that all the friends of Monarchy should hold together, as its enemies had done. For though nothing is more certain than that the latter only formed a minority of the nation, yet they had most powerful aids in the demoralization of the troops, the breaking-up of the constituted authorities, and the indifference and cowardice of the wealthier classes. The united forces of the King, the Feuillants, Lafayette and Dumouriez, would, under the circumstances, have been by no means certain of victory—their disunion ensured their defeat.

In the first place, the King refused to Dumouriez the ratification of the decrees, as he had already done to the Girondists. In vain were Dumouriez's representations, that the veto would have no effect; that the Democrats of the Departments would, in spite of it, maltreat the Priests, and come in armed crowds to Paris; and that he would only

damage his own interests; the King adhered to his resolution, not to sully himself by an act of injustice; and it was no less this conscientious stubbornness of the King, than his consternation at the consequence of the veto, which induced Dumouriez to give in his resignation on the 17th, and to undertake a command in the Army of the North. As an enterprising general, he might perhaps have exercised a greater influence on home politics, than at the head of the impotent body of men which bore the name of Ministerial Council; but here too the blunders of the Conservatives of that period proved an insuperable obstacle. In the appointment of his Ministers the King could only choose from Feuillants and Fayettists; it depended therefore on Lafayette what services Dumouriez should render to the crown. But Lafayette was inexorable in his hatred. On the same day on which Dumouriez resigned his post, a letter from Lafayette arrived in Paris, in which he began a furious declaration of war against the Jacobins, by saying, that after the fall of the three Girondists, Dumouriez,—the least excusable and most infamous of all—should no longer drag on his scandalous existence. All hopes of reconciliation were thus cut off. Dumouriez, in his rage against the Gironde, would have been ready to stake his all upon the monarchy; but then he wished, in case of victory, to receive his share of the spoil, and had no inclination to sacrifice himself for an idea, the partisans of which had spurned him with contempt. He knew his own power, and saw the crisis approaching; and when he went to the camp, it was in the calm conviction, that wiser men than Lafayette, in spite of all their repugnance to him, would summon him when they needed his assistance. Lafayette, too, was soon to learn what he had gained by insulting Dumouriez.

CHAPTER IV.

LAST EFFORTS OF THE FEUILLANTS.

Danton and his associates.—Revolt of the 20th of June.—The minister Monciel.—Lafayette's abortive efforts in Paris.—The Gironde and the danger of the country.—The king's vain dealings with the centre.—Dissolution of Monciel's ministry.

The republican parties were in full activity. The Gironde did not choose to have the power torn from them without resistance, but knowing their own unpopularity with the National guard, and the cowardice of the suburban mob, they feared that they could not carry their point with the resources they possessed in Paris itself. They wished, therefore, to wait until Servan's decree was carried out in the provinces in spite of the royal veto; they called on all the clubs in the Kingdom to send volunteers to the Festival of Confederation, and, more especially, invoked the aid of the Marseillois, and the army of Vaucluse. Still more impatiently did the Cordéliers bestir themselves in all the Metropolitan Sections. Among them there was no talk of delay; they thought it more attractive, and perhaps safer, to bring matters to a conclusion by a rapid *coup de main*. While the Gironde were aiming at the favour of the peasants, by procuring the abolition, without any compensation, even of those seigniorial rights which were founded on a voluntary compact between the parties,—Danton, by a much shorter route, attained the same object among the proletaries of Paris, by demanding at the Jacobin Club the imposition

of fresh taxes on the rich, for the advantage of the poor. This was the battle-cry with which he attracted to himself, with irresistible power, the hearts of the Faubourg St. Antoine.

By his election into the Municipal Council, Danton entered on a new chapter of his political life. His predecessor, Gerville, had been called from this post into the Ministry; and henceforward Danton began to feel the ambition to make himself the chief of a party, and to lay the foundation of an independent power. He had already made considerable progress in this direction. The focus of his influence was still the Club of Cordéliers, which was the rendezvous of people from every part of Paris who found the proceedings of the Jacobin Club itself too respectable. The Members of this society, caring nothing for wordy discussions, and theoretical investigations, made straight for the only interesting part of the Revolution—*the booty*. In the National Assembly the Cordéliers had as yet but few votes; but in the equally important sphere of the capital, their means of influence were very numerous. The Mayor Péthion threw no obstacle in their way, as long as the Gironde was opposed to the Court. The Procureur Manuel, and of the City authorities the two Police Commissioners Panis and Sergent, were strong adherents of Danton; so that the whole apparatus of the metropolitan Police, with all its connections, pecuniary resources and agents, had passed into the service of the insurrection. It was now, therefore, doubly easy for the Cordéliers to collect about them the restless elements of the mighty city. The workmen of the *Faubourgs* acknowledged no superior to Danton's friend, the rich but somewhat reduced brewer Santerre, and Alexandre, the Captain of the National Guard of St. Marcel. In these quarters the greater part even of the National Guardsmen held democratical opinions, and bayonets and pikes were seen united in brotherly harmony. In the other quarters the Democrats were more thinly scattered; but to make up for this the connexions

of the Cordéliers extended to all the holes and corners of the *cité*, the lurking-places of the *Halles*,—to those dens of misery and debauch in which all the criminals of the whole Kingdom met together, and which were now canvassed by the Police themselves for the service of the Revolution. Here were found adventurers of all ranks and nations,—mostly young men practised in every kind of vice, who for a few dollars were ready for either war or murder, and held the insurrection at the disposal of the highest bidder. The money, which was wanted in large quantities for the maintenance of these banditti, was furnished partly by booty-loving speculators, like the Bankers, Frei Brothers,—who saw a golden harvest ripening for them in the dissolution of all legal bonds; partly by the Duke of Orleans, who, though he had no fixed plan, or clearly defined object, had been thrown into fresh transports of rage by some personal insults of the Court; but chiefly, by the Municipality, and, through its mediation, by the State itself.

No one would impute to the leader of such an agitation ideal morality or far-seeing patriotism. Danton was not an insignificant man, but coarse and vulgar, endowed with various gifts, which were however only to be set to work by his unbridled sensuality. As long as his thirst for enjoyment was unslaked, he was indefatigable, full of activity and energy; ready to undertake the most difficult and disagreeable tasks,—to undergo any exertion, and to commit any crime. But when his appetites were satisfied, he was in a state of complete collapse. At such times, an immovable sluggishness and apathetic good-humour took possession of him; he was comfortable, and did not choose to be disturbed. He performed all that animal energy and passion can do, but there was no vein of a higher intellectual life either in his character or education. He possessed neither moral nor physical courage; for nothing but the consciousness of a good cause can inspire the former, and the latter he had lost in sensual indulgences. It was indeed fortunate for his success

in life that the trade of insurrection was not at that time accompanied by any imminent dangers; and he overlooked, with selfish frivolity, the more remote vicissitudes of the career on which be had entered. He had as little real enthusiasm for any political system as any one of his friends. He was for the moment opposed to the King, although he received very considerable sums from the Civil list, because he clearly saw that the last remnant of government, and all the hopes of the friends of order, were bound up in the existence of the Monarch. Like Marat, he rejoiced in the unconditional carrying out of the "rights of man," as the only material part of the constitution,—for the "rights of man" were the all-sufficient weapon to overthrow every constitution, in favour of arbitrary violence. The Demagogues, by whom the pikemen and the ladies of the Halles were roused to enthusiasm, had no other object than the establishment of their own omnipotence by the grace of the sovereign mob. Danton despised the schoolmasters and popular orators, who troubled themselves about principles. Like Dumouriez, and at a later period, Bonaparte, he was of opinion, that in politics everything depends on being the strongest; and only added, at most, one proposition to this simple principle, *viz.* that "he is a fool who, when he is sitting by the fountain, does not draw water for himself." Hitherto, he said, the Patriots had profited but little by the Revolution; it was necessary to begin again.

A man of this stamp might cooperate for a time with the Gironde, but it was impossible to reckon on any long-continued harmony between them. Brissot's character approached most nearly to that of Danton; for with the former also, the Republic was rather the means than the end, and the pleasure of ruling others the principal thing. Yet these two men were irrevocably separated by the difference in their personal and social tastes. Brissot revelled in the consciousness of superior personal address; the exercise of which requiring knowledge and education, he naturally lived in good

society, and in the company of practical statesmen. Danton, on the other hand, wanted, above all things, money, wine and women; and had not the slightest sense of æsthetical refinement in his pleasures. The former, therefore, in spite of his coquetting with Democracy, was after all a politician of the educated classes; while the latter, even when Minister and Diplomatist, never ceased to be the party-chief of the Sansculottes. The other Girondists had still fewer points of contact with Danton. Roland, Vergniaud and Guadet were, men of strict morality in private life, and were fully conscious of the respectability of their lives; and therefore passed judgment on Danton with the same severity, as the equally temperate Lafayette had shown towards the immorality of General Dumouriez. Danton repaid their scorn with interest. He despised the scrupulousness which assumed so respectable a mien at home, and in political life joined in all the machinations of the Cordéliers. Roland was the greatest stumbling-block in his path. For though he also wished to overthrow the monarchy, yet he desired that it should be succeeded by an orderly arrangement of affairs, under a republic; while the Cordéliers wished for revolution as a means of doing away with all order and all responsibility.

All the more zealously did they now hurry matters on to make the best of the favourable moment, and to carry off the booty before the eyes of the Gironde. The latter party may have been rather anxious as to the consequences of a premature rising, or one independent of themselves; but among their friends, too, there were hotheaded individuals enough, who unreservedly threw themselves into the vortex of agitation, and the Girondist chiefs were well aware, that by openly checking the movement, they risked the loss of all their influence, and the restoration of the Royal authority. And thus, for the moment, the distinction between the two parties was lost to view; partizans of the Gironde and adherents of the Cordéliers were seen in the meetings

of the Section, working together towards a common object.[1]

On the 16th of June, the Faubourgs resolved to celebrate the 20th of June, the anniversary of the Tennis-Court, by a solemn procession; and those who joined in it were to carry arms as on that eventful day, and express their wishes both to the National Assembly and the King. By collecting all the rabble of the city in the Faubourg,[2] and joining with them the peasants of the nearest villages, they thought they might perhaps reckon on 20,000 men.[3] The procession itself, they considered, would attract fresh crowds,—an occasion for a tumult would easily be found, and then the storm might burst on the unprepared Tuileries. Such a *coup* could neither be prepared or carried out without the knowledge of Péthion; but he hated the King bitterly, and did all that he could, short of public sanction, to secure the success of the undertaking. The men of the Faubourgs had no inclination for a contest with the National Guard, and would not have stirred if Péthion had carried out a resolution of the Council of the Commune, in accordance with the express provision of the law, that no petition should be received from men in arms. Instead of that, he directed the Commander of the National Guard not to suppress the movement, but to guide it. He communicated the order of the Department,—which was contradictory to his own,—not to the Commander himself, but only to each of the chiefs of Battalions, and thus lamed the efficiency of the

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[1] Louis Blanc (Vol. VI. ch. 12) in order to throw the whole responsibility of the day's proceedings on the Gironde, points out that no mention is made either of Danton or Camille Desmoulins. It is true that Danton did not appear openly; but who will believe that Santerre, Alexandre, and Sergent would undertake anything of the kind without Danton's consent? The ever-cautious Robespierre warned them against making a partial insurrection. — [2] Beaulieu, III. 359. — [3] Evidence of Lareynie, in Buchez, XVII. 117. Santerre had sent several *affidés* into the villages. The peasants of Montreuil threatened to make an incursion on the 21st.

National Guard, in proportion as he raised the courage of the revolutionary masses.[1] When Santerre, on the morning of the 20th, heard his men considering whether the National Guard would fire on them, he cried, "Péthion is there—don't be afraid—forwards—march!" At first he had only 1,500;[2] but they were soon joined by the battalions of the Faubourgs, so that the advancing mass amounted to about 8,000.[3] Other National Guards then followed by Péthion's orders; a crowd of curious people accompanied them, so that at last 30—40,000 armed men, and a crowd in all of, perhaps 100,000 persons, were set in motion.[4] One division directed its course to the National Assembly,—into which Vergniaud, in spite of all the protests of the Right, procured their admission—and read an address, in which they demanded the blood of the conspirators, and the overthrow of the King, if his wishes should prove different to those of the people. After the procession had defiled through the National Assembly, amid the roll of drums, patriotic speeches and dancing, the whole mass hastened to the Tuileries, where 20 battalions of the National Guard, were drawn up, but left without any orders. A rush was made against the great central gate, which was suddenly opened from within; and the whole swarm, with wild cries of delight, poured into the palace, as into a fortress carried by storm.

The King, who had just received from the officials of the Municipality the most satisfactory assurances respecting the sentiments of the people, was completely taken by surprise.

Nevertheless, he quickly recovered himself, ordered the door of his room to be opened to the rioters, and being driven into a bay-window, he was surrounded for two hours by the rabble, who kept crying out, "Away with the veto, long live the patriotic Ministers!—ratify the decrees!" The King

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[1] *Vid.* minutes of these proceedings in the *Révue Retrospective*, and also in a more complete form in Mortimer-Ternaux, Vol. I, B. 2. Note 9. — [2] Lareynie. — [3] Beaulieu. — [4] Peltier. Prudhomme.

remained inflexible, a tall young man struck at him several times with a pike—others tried to reach him with the points of their swords; and four soldiers of the National Guard who were about him had great trouble in protecting him from violence.[1] The people then became a little quieter, and the majority had evidently no instructions for the contingency that the King should not be immediately intimidated: they began to drink his health, and compelled him to put on a cap of Freedom; they came to the conclusion that he was not so bad after all, but they could not be induced to leave the room.

Behind all these brutalities however, there was nothing but insolence, and no real courage. When the muskets outside happened to rattle, the whole swarm rushed hastily to the doors in flight; but the sound was really only the salute with which the National Guard received some Deputies of the National Assembly, and the mob again remained rooted to the spot. Even the representations of the Demagogues, Vergniaud and Isnard, were fruitless; they too, were answered by the cry—"The Ministers—the decrees—away with the Veto!" In the garden below, the cry was several times raised that the people in the room above had made an end of the King. Louis was not to be shaken—he shewed neither fear nor anger, and thereby did the best thing, perhaps, to prolong his own life and that of his family. At last, after a lapse of an hour and a half Péthion arrived. Unfortunately, he said, he had not received the intelligence till very late, and had then immediately risen from his dinner, but had been delayed at every step. He then made a speech, lauding the wisdom of the people—promising the fulfilment

[1] These details are all confirmed by the regularly reported evidence of the National Guards who were present, as well as the report of the Departmental Commission. Whatever Louis Blanc may say about the harmlessness of this affair, if the King refused to leave the hall, it was because he did not trust the Municipal officer who invited him to do so.

of all their wishes, and at last coaxed them out of the apartments; a little after 7o'clock, the Palace was cleared.

The whole course of the proceedings plainly shews what different influences were at work amongst the people. The chiefs of the Gironde in the National Assembly were not concerned in getting up this riot. When it broke out, they only rendered it secret, and therefore feeble, assistance, and contented themselves with demanding the recall of Roland. On this condition Péthion smoothed the way for the insurrection, which he might have prevented by a single order to the National Guard. The Girondists therefore, did not actually plan the death of the King, but it was they alone who opened the gates of the Palace to the murderers; for that there were such in the crowd, cannot be doubted. It was a similar case to that of the 6th of October; when, at Versailles, the bandits,—schooled by Marat and his associates—marched in the train of the revolutionary demonstration, and broke with bloodthirsty impetuosity through the crafty plans of the original movers. As on this occasion the murder of Louis had failed, thro' the cowardice of the murderers—the firmness of a few guards—and the calmness of the King, the day had passed without any practical result, and the whole proceedings appeared merely in the light of a vulgar and disgusting farce.

After the 20th of June, all parties remained in arms—they had gone too far to believe in any peaceful measures on the part of their opponents; they had been so near bloodshed, that it was no longer possible that the shedding of blood could be avoided; and, until the final catastrophe, France showed no other signs of life than preparations for the decisive blow.

A new Ministry had just been appointed, and was composed of Feuillants, or *protégés* of Lafayette—at that time synonymous terms. There was a man among them, Terrier de Monciel, Minister of the Interior, who thoroughly understood the state of affairs in its origin and results, and

was not to be turned from his purpose in this great struggle by any romantic theories. He had previously been President of the Department of the Jura, where he had risen into notice as a liberal, and had been made conservative by the scandalous conduct of the Democrats. He had no idea of confining himself, like the Lameths, to intrigues, or, like Lafayette, to protests. It was clear to him, that the Jacobins were dangerous, not because they violated the constitution, but because the very nature of the constitution itself *created* Jacobins. He saw that the contest had already passed out of the region of the laws, and had become a passage of arms for life and death. His intellect was cool enough, and his heart warm enough, to carry him into the midst of danger, and to enable him when there, to make use of the best means for victory. For the first time since Mirabeau's death, the Jacobins—lately the attacking party—saw themselves threatened by a straightforward and determined adversary.

The riot of the 20th gave strength to its opponents, just because it had been nothing more than a riot. Public opinion was roused among the middle classes at Paris and in the Provinces, and also in the armies. Two attempts made by the Cordéliers on the 21st and 25th to renew the attack on the Tuileries, were frustrated; the former by the interference of the National-Guard, and the latter by a prudent warning from Péthion.[1] Their only result was to increase the wrath of the *Bourgeoisie* at these dangerous disturbances; and whereas, a month earlier, only eight thousand had signed the petition against Servan's decree, there were now twenty thousand names[2] attached to a very energetic peti-

[1] *Rev. de Paris*, 13, 572. *On se désista de la nouvelle démarche projetée.* If was not till afterwards that the tale was invented that the disturbances had been fomented by disguised Royalists. — [2] The Jacobins declared at the time that most of these names were surreptitiously obtained. We shall see how emphatically they withdrew this assertion three months afterwards.

tion for the punishment of the rioters. The National Guard only wanted an influential and energetic leader to free itself from the republican Municipality, and to disperse the Jacobin Club by force of arms. The majority of the National Assembly would then have followed the ruling power in Paris, towards the Right, just as willingly as hitherto towards the Left; and a turn of affairs might have taken place of incalculable importance. No one can assert that success would have been certain, and the revolution at once ended by such a course, but the possibility of such a result was offered. The chances of success would have been greatly increased if a wise reform of the Constitution, according to Mirabeau's principles, had been effected; and at the same time there had been increased activity in military preparations to meet foreign invasion, and straightforward proposals of peace had been made to Austria. All these objects were attainable, and they were often discussed in the Feuillants' Club. By such a course, no means of agitation would have been left to the Jacobins which might not have been met with superior force. It was the last opportunity of saving France from the horrors of 1793, and Europe from an universal war of twenty years. But alas! the only possible leader in the existing state of affairs was General Lafayette, who had, indeed, the wish to suppress the Jacobins, and to conclude an honourable peace with Austria; but his party was soon to acquire a very sad experience of the extent of his energy in facing danger.

He received intelligence of the proceedings of the 20th of June, two days after the events, in his camp of Teinieres, in the position which he had taken up between Maubeuge and Bavay, in order to support Luckner. Such an answer to his late threatening letter was more than he could bear. He determined to go to Paris and annihilate the Club. With this view he sent his adjutant, Bureau de Puzy, to Luckner with a double commission. In the first place, he informed him of the contents of a letter which he had previously re-

ceived from Dumouriez, to the effect that the Prussians were advancing, and that consequently he must return to his old position; a change which made it necessary for Luckner, too, to evacuate his advanced lines, retire behind Valenciennes, and content himself with covering the French frontiers.[1] Luckner replied that he had already represented to the Minister the difficulties of his position; that he had no idea of acting any longer on the offensive, and was only awaiting orders from Paris. In the second place, Bureau was directed to inform the Marshal of Lafayette's intention to go to Paris, and in the meantime to try and find out the blunt old warrior's opinion of this enterprise. At first Luckner cried out, "Is he mad! Let him take care that the Jacobins do not cut off his head." He then contented himself with saying that he understood nothing about politics;—that Lafayette might act in the matter as he thought useful and just.

Meanwhile Lafayette had withdrawn his army to a position protected by the guns of Maubeuge, and fixed the 26th for the day of his departure for Paris. He can hardly have had any settled plan of operations. He intended to make a speech in the National Assembly, and to rouse the National Guard to enthusiasm. That he had considered beforehand what further steps were to be taken is rendered doubtful by the fact, that he had not prepared any one for his arrival in Paris. On the contrary, he wrote as late as the 25th to Lajard, the Minister at War, a man entirely devoted to him, that he did not see how he was to carry on a foreign war, as long as anarchy at home increased tenfold the military weakness of France. This weakness, he said, concerned

[1] Luckner to the Minister at War, June 22. On the 20th he had asked for reinforcements to continue his operations; on the 26th, after a conference with Bureau, he declared to the Minister that he knew nothing better than defence of the borders. These documentary dates are rather fatal to the credit of Bureau's report to the National Assembly, and to Lafayette's statements, VI. 82.

him most of all, because he was in greater danger from without than Luckner, who had only the Austrians on his hands; while he himself had the Prussians, and, what was worse, the Prussian Generals,[1] to deal with. He concluded by saying that he should not be able to make head against them, unless some fortunate crisis previously occurred in Paris; but besides the expression of these desires and fears his letter contained nothing. Lajard, therefore, like all the rest of the world, was greatly astonished, when on the 28th the General arrived in Paris; and not the slightest preparation had been made for his reception.

In the National Assembly, the Left, on hearing of his arrival, concluded that he was accompanied by a few regiments at least, in order to disperse their party and break up the Jacobin Club. It is certain that in the mood in which the National Guard then was, the Republicans would have had no means of resistance. But when the General appeared at their bar alone, peaceable, and armed only with the weapons of speech, their courage was immediately restored. The Galleries murmured, Guadet spoke of a new Cromwell, and the debate ended by referring the question to a Committee: Lafayette then went to the King, to whom he declared that the Jacobins must be morally and physically annihilated;[2] and at the same time professed that he was still in favour of the American constitution with an hereditary Executive.[3] The King was courteous but reserved; and when, after Lafayette had left the room, the Princess Elisabeth exclaimed, that they ought to forget the past, and ally themselves with the only man who could yet save them, the Queen replied: "Better to die, than allow ourselves to be saved by Lafayette and the Constitutionalists." The General summoned a number of intimate friends to a council at his house. The par-

[1] This sentence is *wanting* in the copy of the letter in Lafayette's *Mémoires*. — [2] Lally Tollendal to the King of Prussia. — [3] Morris's *Journal*, July 29th.

ticulars of these tardy deliberations are variously stated in each report of the proceedings; but one essential fact may be found in every one of them, that irresolution and hesitation prevailed among those who were present at the meeting. When Lafayette brought forward the question of breaking up the Club by force of arms, his friends who belonged to the Directions of the Department declared that such a step would be illegal, and must therefore be especially avoided by them, as the specifically *legal* party.[1] Then came a Deputation from some battalions of the Parisian National Guard, who had planted a tree before his door, and set him a guard of honour. They now called on him to lead them, without further hesitation, against the Jacobins, and destroy at one blow the nest of all the mischief. The General replied that he would not set an example of a breach of the law, nor would it be necessary to do so, since he was sure of the support of two-thirds of the National Assembly, and consequently of the legal dissolution of the Club.[2] It probably occurred to him afterwards that the majority of the National Assembly would never give a free vote on any subject until the Club and Rostra had lost their power. They agreed therefore to meet in the evening in the Champs Elysées[3] with all who were of the same mind as themselves. But the first repulse of the National Guards must have had a taming effect; the staunch royalists in the battalions had meanwhile asked for instructions at the Palace, and had been told to take no part in any movement whatever;[4] so that not a hundred men came to the *rendez-vous* in the evening. On the following morning the attempt was renewed with still less success. The Jacobins had from the very beginning been prepared for the worst, but they now began to breathe again, and accompanied the departure of the despairing General with derisive shouts of joy.[5]

[1] Lally-Tollendal. — [2] Beaulieu, *Essais*. — [3] Toulongeon, *Hist. de la Révolution*. — [4] Campan's *Mémoires*. — [5] I have not mentioned the anecdote that Lafayette intended to make his *coup d'état* on the occasion of a review

All parties now saw that the matter could not be brought to a decision by the forces of the capital. The Conservatives could do nothing without the army, nor the revolutionary party without the *Fédérés*. Everything depended on which of the two parties should be the first to collect its forces, and to deprive its opponents of all means of resistance at the decisive moment.

The Provinces, which had been canvassed with equal zeal by both parties, began to ferment anew, as they had done in February and March. The mob indulged in corn-riots and persecution of Priests; while all those who possessed property became more impatient every day of the long continuance of anarchy. It was now that the Minister Monciel began to make his energy and influence felt in every quarter. His principal aim was to carry out a plan similar to that which Mirabeau had formed; the main features of which were the removal of the King from Paris, the dissolution of the National Assembly by a great demonstration of the Departments, and a change in the Constitution in connexion with new States-General. Most of the Councils of the Departments were disposed to consent to these measures. The Jacobins themselves counted from 25 to 32 who were prepared to second any step which the Court might take. A number of them had already regular representatives in Paris, with whom the Minister discussed current events of the day. It was important, however, until the moment for decisive action had arrived, to secure the quiet of the capital, and it was with this view that Monciel struck a blow at the

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of the National Guard, but that the Queen informed Péthion, who thereupon countermanded the review. From the sentiments of the Queen towards Lafayette this was not in itself impossible, but we doubt the truth of the story. The only foundation for it is the statement of Lafayette and his friend; neither Beaulieu nor Lally, neither Campan nor Bertrand, know anything about it; it was, too, an old trick of the Jacobins to get such stories of court intrigues conveyed to the ears of Lafayette, to excite him against the Queen.

very heart of the Girondist tactics, by ordering, on June 30th, all the Departments to stop the march of the *Fédérés* to Paris; since, as he said, all good citizens could celebrate the festival of fraternity at home; and Paris would be imperilled by an accumulation of bandits.

On the very same day the Gironde laid their plan of operations, without any concealment, before the National Assembly. Immediately after the fall of Roland, this party had procured the nomination of a Committee of 21 members, to deliberate on the state of the country, and the means to be taken to meet the impending dangers. This Committee brought up its first report on the 30th inst. It was a very comprehensive programme, which announced a whole series of new laws, and through these—but without any formal change in the constitution—an absolute dictatorship of the National Assembly. This report, accompanied by a solemn declaration that the country was in danger, and a recommendation—that all constituted authorities should be declared *en permanence*, and the National Guards placed under arms, —that the recruiting for the army should be carried on with increased energy—that Commissioners from the Assembly should be sent off to every camp—that the responsibility of the Ministers be made more stringent—and a new law enacted against refractory Priests. The Right listened in apathetic silence, for their courage had fallen greatly since Lafayette's failure. The Centre—in other words the great mass of members of no settled opinions—fell once more completely under the influence of the galleries, whose uproarious turbulence was constantly on the increase.[1] The Left eagerly demanded an immediate and thorough discussion of the resolutions of the

[1] From the numerous testimonies to this fact we only select one of a journalist of the extreme Left. It was a disadvantage he says for the Royalists that they had fixed seats in the Right; *ils étaient trop en évidence, on les huait même avant d'ouvrir la bouche, ils étaient jugés au premier pas qu'ils faisaient en entrant, et cela chaque jour, les tribunes étaient inexorables.*

Committee; at the conclusion of which, the final proposition for the suspension of the King was to be brought forward —a measure which had already been proposed in the Committee by Gensonné and had met with the loudly expressed approval of the majority. It was thought that the King would then have no longer any means of resisting the decree of suspension, and that the whole power of the government would pass into the hands of the Assembly without a struggle. Still they were prepared also for more violent occurrences; and with all their dislike to an armed insurrection, everything was done to facilitate its success. Thus on the 1st of July, a decree was passed, which though it did not directly annul Terrier's order against the *Fédérés*, rendered it altogether futile, by promising to all the Civic guards, who should come to Paris to the festival of the 14th, free quarters in the capital until the 18th, after which they were ordered to march to a camp near Soissons. On the evening of the 2nd, the National Assembly, in accordance with the wishes of the Faubourg, ordered that the Staff of the National Guard should be dissolved; and on the 3d, it was carried, on the motion of Carnot, that the former French Guards should be recalled to Paris, under the pretext of forming them into a division of Gensd'armes. This was just such a police force as Panis and Sergent needed. With such defenders of the throne, the march of the *Fédérés* to Paris was hardly necessary; the moment appeared to be approaching, when the overthrow of the monarchy might take place like a harmless scenic spectacle.

Thus freed from all immediate obstacles, and encouraged by fair prospects in all directions, the Assembly, on the 3rd of July, opened the great debate on the danger of the country. Vergniaud led the way in a long and enthusiastic speech, the effect of which was enhanced by a specious moderation in form, but which, in reality, went straight to the conclusion, that the King, by his secret understanding witht he Austrians, Prussians and the Emigrés, had incurred

the penalty of deposition, expressly denounced by the Constitution for such cases. He ended by proposing that the country should be declared "in danger"—the responsibility of Ministers rendered more stringent—and the King brought back to the right path, by an energetic but conciliatory manifesto. The effect of this speech, which received considerable applause even from the opponents of the speaker, was prodigious, and the assent of the majority entirely won. It was in vain that Dumas, in a far less striking but very concise extemporaneous speech, endeavoured to bring back the feeling of the Assembly to some accordance with the real facts of the case. He reminded them that the King had always been averse to the declaration of war, and that the Gironde alone had forced it from him; that he had always done all in his power to prevent the Emigrés from forming any connection with the Powers, and that it was the Assembly alone which had caused the fusion of these two parties; that the King had destined the main strength of the army for the defence of the Eastern frontier, which the Girondist Ministry alone had left unprotected by an ill-advised attack on Belgium. No one could deny these statements, or conceal the fact that the present complicated state of affairs owed its origin, not to the King, but solely to the Gironde. But it was no less true, that under present circumstances the King must regard a victory of the Prussians as a gain to himself, and must therefore appear to the eyes of most men an enemy of the national honour and independence. Brissot might well look back with pride on the revolutionary sagacity with which, at the beginning of the year, he had concentrated all his strength in the one master stroke—the kindling of the war. It now became more apparent than ever, how greatly the position of the King had been compromised by it. Two-thirds of the Assembly were in favour of monarchy, and yet, on the very first day, it was evident that the issue of the debate would be favourable to the revolutionary party. As early as the 4th of July, a

decree was passed which ordained the *permanence* of all the constituted authorities, and the levying of all the National guards, in case the country should be declared to be in danger. No one doubted that the declaration itself was close at hand. Bishop Torné declared without reserve that the treachery of the King was manifest, and the Dictatorship of the National Assembly the only means of saving the country. It was not the political parties alone, but the great mass of the population, which the fiery phantom of treason to the country alienated from the throne, and delivered, even against their own will, into the bondage of the revolutionary faction. The feudal press, with reckless audacity, did everything in its power to extend and deepen the terror and exasperation of the people, by boasting of the good understanding, which, according to them, existed between the officers and regiments of the French army and the enemy. They announced the approaching defection of the troops, and threatened the Parisians with every sort of outrage at the hands of the Croatians. These circumstances may in a great degree account for—though they can by no means justify—the subsequent horrors of revolutionary frenzy and cruelty.

While the Gironde was thus advancing boldly, methodically, and step by step, towards their object, the Court was full of terror and uncertainty. Hitherto, the influence of Monciel, supported by the American Minister Morris, and the essentially similar propositions of the ex-Ministers Bertrand and Montmorin, had been in the ascendant. But even among these men there existed no complete harmony; and still less did the King and Queen make up their minds to follow some one course with steadiness and confidence. They received innumerable reports, and the most irreconcileable counsels, to each of which they lent an ear in turn, and destroyed one plan by another. This was indeed hardly to be wondered at, for their own personal position became every day more dreadful. If the Queen appeared at the

window, she was frightened away from it by the malicious and obscene abuse of the mob. The religious services of the Royal Chapel were interrupted by the noise of the patriots; for weeks the Royal family lived in dread of poison, and could only venture to eat the food which had been specially prepared for them. One night the Chamberlain of the Queen apprehended a murderer, who was lying in wait for her in her antechamber. The Queen several times exclaimed that she would rather be shut up for months in a tower on the seashore, than endure such a condition any longer.[1] She listened to all the schemes for her liberation. She allowed the Ministers to negotiate with Lafayette, and other confidants, and with the emigrated Princes, and was willing that the Civil list should be employed in endeavours to bribe Péthion, Danton and other patriots; but at the bottom of her heart, she had no serious hopes in anything but the arrival of the German armies. In the middle of May, the Swiss, Mallet du Pan, had been sent off to both the Kings to keep them firm to Leopold's views, and to bar the influence of the Emigrés.[2] He was at this moment in Frankfort, at the coronation of the Emperor Francis II., and his reports were looked for with the most anxious suspense. The Tuileries had no means of aiding the Coalition, as the conduct of the war was entirely in the hands of the Ministers and the Generals; who, though at enmity with the Jacobins, and bent on the restoration of the monarchy, were not willing to concede any direct influence to foreign Powers. On this point, Monciel and Lafayette were agreed; and in the latter part of June they determined to withdraw Luckner's troops from Belgium, and to oppose the entrance of

[1] *Mémoires de Mad. Campan.* Instead of this, Lafayette makes her say; „It would be happy for us if we were shut up in a tower," and then hints that, in accordance with this wish, Danton had the Royal family brought to the Temple after the 10th of August. — [2] *Vid.* the now complete minutes of this negotiation in the *Mémoires*, &c. *de Mallet du Pan.*

the Prussians with their combined forces. On the 4th July, moreover, orders were sent off to Montesquiou to despatch 20 battalions of the army of the South—nearly half his infantry—to strengthen the army of the Rhine. At the same time it was settled that Lafayette and Luckner should change commands, and the former undertake the Flemish army, while the latter took the command on the frontiers of Luxembourg and the Rhine. One motive for this was Lafayette's disinclination to measure his strength with the Prussians;[1] but a still stronger one was the plan of changing, not only Generals but troops, and of bringing, in the course of their movements, some loyal regiments into the neighbourhood of Paris, and carrying off the King to Compiegne, or some other place, under their protection. The Counter-revolution would then commence; and at the same time an honourable peace might be concluded with the Germans through the mediation of the liberated King.[2]

These plans were still in embryo, when the National Assembly dealt the already mentioned blows. Their effect in the Tuileries was overpowering. An immediate outbreak was apprehended, and the King was without any settled plan—without money or troops under his own control.[3] He now, therefore, suddenly began to listen to those who recommended an exactly opposite line,—the worst perhaps which could be imagined—and, at the last moment, to seek his safety in gaining over the weak and aimless mass of the National Assembly. The King was now to assume a conciliatory and liberal tone,—to adopt as far as possible the revolutionary measures as his own,—and thus, by means of the Centre, to

[1] *Conf.* his letter to Lajard (quoted above) of June 25. It is true that Lafayette in his *Mémoires* represents the matter as if Luckner had occasioned the change; but the latter, in a despatch of the 12th of July, expresses his astonishment at the manner in which he was constantly removed from place to place. — [2] Despatches of Luckner and Lafayette to Lajard, July 6th, and Lajard's answer of July 9th. Lally-Tollendal to Louis XVI., supplement to his letter to the King of Prussia. — [3] Morris's *Journal*, July 2d. —

win back a majority to his side.[1] Every suggestion of prudence and dignity were against such a course; but the dread of impending dangers, and indifference to the plans proposed by the Ministers, decided the Court in its favour. The King, therefore, now gave his consent to the last decree respecting the Seigniorial privileges; and wrote to the National Assembly on the 4th July, signifying his wish to be present in person at the festival of the Confederation, and to take the oath of fraternity. It was impossible to announce his altered policy in a more striking manner.

The Left were surprised, but remained suspicious, and did not allow themselves to be diverted from their course. The Gironde and the Jacobins vied with one another in demaning the declaration that the country was in danger. Danjou had already argued in the Club, that a legislative body was no longer sufficient; and that for the remodelling of the Constitution a National Convention was absolutely necessary. Chepy added that all noblemen should be removed from commands in the army; all emigrant property sold; and new occupants appointed to all administrative and judicial offices. With no less vehemence, Bishop Torné, from the midst of the Girondists, demanded of the National Assembly that they should no longer look to the laws as their rule of conduct, but the salvation of the country alone. He had already endeavoured to prove among his friends, that it was all over with the Constitution, and that deliverance was only to be sought for in the South of the Empire. The motions brought forward continually increased in extravagance. On the 16th, Condorcet proposed that the Ministry of Finance should be suppressed, and the Civil list placed under surveillance; and gave, at the same time, a sample of the social and moral condition which the Gironde were preparing for France, under the name of civil liberty. Abolition of wills—increase of small proprietors—parity of natural and

[1] Lally-Tollendal to Louis XVI. July 19th, Posteript.

legitimate children—freedom of divorce—such were the reforms demanded by Condorcet as the surest bulwarks against royal despotism.

Louis XVI. might have been satisfied with this first experience. But the negotiations with the Centre had already begun, and had excited lively satisfaction in that part of the Assembly which feared alike the victory of the Right and the Left, and dreaded still more the dangers of the contest which must precede that victory. It was a favourite saying among them, that compliance was the greatest of patriotic virtues; that it was by party dissensions alone that the country was endangered, and that the sensible man would be ready to meet his opponent half-way. They had hitherto acted in accordance with these maxims in respect to the Gironde and the Strangers Gallery; and were, of course, enchanted that the King was willing to assume the same attitude towards themselves. On the 7th July there was a perfect storm of enthusiasm, when Bishop Lamourette gave words to these sentiments—preached universal reconciliation,—called on the Assembly to join him in imprecations on the Republic, and the Chamber of Peers—and on coming down from the rostra, threw himself into the arms of a former opponent. The men who had no party were uproarious in their jubilations at the restoration of peace and harmony; and the two factions of the Right and Left had to make haste to preserve the respect of their fellow citizens by an equally virtuous behaviour. They vied in embracing and kissing each other as brothers, and sons of a common country. The whole Assembly was dissolved in emotion and enthusiasm, and, forthwith sending word to the King, brought him into the House, in order to turn the freshness of these warm feelings to account for the good cause. He, too, witnessed another outburst of patriotism and loyalty, and returned to the palace full of good hopes for the future.

But what availed it, thus for a moment to stir the turbid froth of the National Assembly. It would have needed a

strength and a courage greater than that of all the parties put together, to curb their fierce contention; and how long could a peace endure which had only been brought about by the weakness of the most timid! Affairs immediately resumed their former course. In the very hour in which Lamourette was celebrating his triumph, the Department brought its investigation of the events of the 20th June to a close, and pronounced, as its result, a sentence of suspension from office against Péthion and Manuel. In such cases, according to the Constitution, the King in the first instance, and then the Assembly, had to decide on the legal validity of the judgment; and the Municipality immediately hastened to evoke the protection of the latter for its virtuous Mayor. The King, endeavoured even now, to carry out the so recently inaugurated policy of peace, and begged, as one personally concerned, to be excused from giving a voté in the matter. But the Gironde had no intention of letting such an opportunity of exciting fresh bitterness of feeling pass away, and adhered to the directions of the constitution. On the following day, all the organs of the Left declared that the late reconciliation was either an insidious intrigue, or a disgusting farce. "Between Virtue and Vice," said Prudhomme, "no peace is conceivable." "What we want," said Carra, "is not kisses, but the suspension of the King, and the tocsin ringing through the whole Empire." In the Jacobin Club thousands shouted assent, when Billaud-Varennes cried out that all such sentimental scenes only foreboded mischief; and that "against crowned robbers, and devourers of the people, one must lead, not a whining priest, but Hercules and his club!" In the National Assembly itself, Brissot, on the 3rd, began a great speech on the danger of the country, with the declaration that a single individual was crippling the strength of France; and that Prussia and Austria would be vanquished—as soon as the Tuileries were captured. He concluded by moving the appointment of a Committee of the Assembly for the supreme direction of the police and the

policy of the country—a "Committee," as it was called a year afterwards, "of public safety."

In short the policy of concession proved, in the course of twenty-four hours, to be an utter failure. Monciel had never had the slightest doubt on this head; he energetically opposed the proceedings of Louis in the National Assembly, and finally sent in his resignation.[1]—After such a complete *fiasco*, the King was helpless and aimless; the influence of Monciel once more gained ground, and once more it seemed as if Louis would give himself up unconditionally to his guidance. A message came from Lafayette, announcing that he and Luckner would be in Paris on the 14th, and, after the festival, would publicly conduct the King to Compiegne, where, under the protection of loyal regiments, he might commence a new era of freedom. Lafayette was firmly convinced that the mere removal of the King would have such an effect in Paris, that all the good elements in the National Guard would unite, and the majority in the National Assembly come to their senses; and that after a few weeks, the King would return to the Capital as a peaceful *triumphator*. Lafayette was, however in his inmost heart, averse to any change in the constitution.[2] Such a plan would have nullified itself; and therefore Lally-Tollendal undertook to modify it on his own responsibility, in order to make it agreeable to the King. He represented to Louis that the intentions of Lafayette were these—to restore to the monarchy its necessary privileges—to form a new Chamber from the landed aristocracy—and to reinstate the nobility in their honorary privileges. The Ministry supported these proposals with all their influence; and on the 9th of July, Louis gave his assent. But this resolution was of no long duration. Montmorin thought even the departure of the King from Paris too hazardous a step; and

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[1] Morris's *Journal*, July 8th. — [2] Lafayette's *Mémoires*, IV. Supplement to Lally's letter to the King of Prussia.

Bertrand feared that Lafayette's attachment to constitutional form would prevent him from acting with vigour and decision. The Queen felt the force of both these objections. "All the addresses," she said, "which have been sent up against the proceedings of the 20th, only manifest the attachment of those who signed them to peace and order, but not royalist feeling enough to induce them to fire a single gun in our defence against the Parisians and the Marseillois. Lafayette has lost all power to help us, ever since, by his visit to the National Assembly, he cured its members of all fear. And he moreover reverences the source of all evil—the Constitution—as the only thing which deserves to be defended."[1] In a word, she saw neither help nor deliverance from within, but danger in every quarter,—in the provinces as well as in Paris,—until the arrival of the Germans; nay, she thought that their position would be rendered worse, if, by their flight from the capital, they should evacuate the field of decisive action. She was convinced that, for some time to come, nothing but the restoration of unlimited royal power could save France from incalculable evil. At the same time she was farther than ever removed from all thought of the *ancien régime*, with its nobility, its landed proprietors, and its Church; and could therefore, reckon still less on the Emigrés than on the Constitutionalists. She had nothing else to propose, than that they should wait in the hope of living to witness the entrance of the Prussians into Paris.

The King did not long resist her influence; and on July 10th he signified to his Ministers his intention to remain in Paris. The announcement fell on them like a thunderbolt, and they immediately declared that they could no longer maintain their position. The news of this Ministerial crisis caused great and general surprise in the Assembly, where no one was able to account for it, and a long silence pre-

[1] Beaulieu.

vailed, only broken by the clapping of hands in the galleries. Lamourette then made another attempt in the style of the 7th July, by proposing to defer the declaration that the country was in danger, as well as the enquiry into the disorders of the 20th of June. He had the mortification of seeing that scarcely any one took any notice of him, but that, on the contrary, the Committee of Twelve was directed to present their final report on the following day. Subsequent reflection weighed on their minds as to the real significance of the Ministerial crisis. Roland's interpretation was the most flattering to his party. He was convinced that Louis XVI., weary of the contest with the Gironde, wished to recall himself and his friends into the Cabinet. This was no reason, however, for stopping the parliamentary measures by which they meant to subdue the King; but they heartily rejoiced that they should no longer need a rising in the streets in league with the Cordéliers. Roland, therefore, immediately sent for Barbaroux, and directed him to stay the march of the Marseillois, because there was a prospect of a second Girondist Ministry.

A greater mistake could hardly have been made. The King had dismissed the Feuillants because he looked for deliverance from foreigners alone. The Cordéliers, on the other hand, rejected every kind of regular government, and would have dealt their blows with twofold malice against a Ministry of the Gironde.

CHAPTER V.

THE 10TH OF AUGUST.

ROBESPIERRE, BILLAUT, COLLOT D'HERBOIS.—EMBARRASSMENT OF THE GIRONDE.—THE GIRONDE ADVOCATES A REGENCY UNDER LOUIS XVII.—STATE OF THE FINANCES.—RUIN OF THE PEASANT PROPRIETORS.—REVOLUTIONARY PLANS OF THE JACOBINS.—THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REJECTS THEM.—REVOLT OF AUG. 10TH.—REVOLUTIONARY MUNICIPALITY.—SUSPENSION OF THE KING.—CONVOCATION OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

THE very day after the breaking up of the Ministry, the country was declared to be in danger. The National Assembly made this declaration on the 11th of July, and thereby made the whole National Guard available for general military service, and invoked the vigilance of all the constituted Authorities, and the self-sacrificing devotion of the people. Under the prescribed and solemn forms, the signal for rising was gradually transmitted through every part of the kingdom, and had a powerful effect. It did not, indeed, bring any great increase of military strength to the Generals, as I shall explain hereafter in connection with the military history; but it rendered the intended service to the home policy of the Girondists. The sometimes noisy, sometimes gloomy, but always theatrical, manner, in which the danger of the country was proclaimed—the solemn processions which moved to the sound of trumpets—considerably increased the excitement, and set the champions of the Revolution (at any rate before the eyes of the populace) in the light of defenders of the national independence against the hated foreigners.

In Paris, moreover, the Cordéliers considered that all the existing laws of the country were repealed by the decree;

and that the omnipotence of the people was proclaimed at the same time as the danger of the country. The mighty city reverberated with the preparations for the Confederation-festival, during which every one looked for an outbreak. Meanwhile the *Fédérés*—who had already arrived—conducted themselves with great turbulence, doubled the noise in the strangers' gallery of the Assembly, and, on the 13th, helped to carry the acquittal of Péthion. The King had upheld the suspension of the Mayor; the reasons for which were unanswerable; but the impartial members of the Assembly feared infinite mischief from the passions of the *Fédérés*, if the virtuous Mayor were not triumphantly restored. He, therefore, was the real hero of the festival, which was celebrated tumultuously enough on the 14th;—in other respects, however, the day did not come up to the expectations of the Democrats. On the one hand, Monciel's prohibition had its effect, and at any rate delayed the arrival of the *Fédérés*, of whom scarcely 3,000 had reached Paris on the 14th, and these were entirely lost in the National Guard of the Capital. There were, moreover, still some regiments of the line at Paris, against whose array the revolutionists did not dare to rise; and whom the Gironde found occasion to order out of Paris, on the very day after the festival—the 15th. For this, nothing was needed but a simple decree, as the presence of troops in the place where the Assembly held its sittings was made dependent on its approval. From this time, the King only kept a battalion of Swiss in the city for the protection of his person.

The Cordéliers and *Fédérés* consequently were able to pursue their noisy and reckless course with the less hindrance. The latter, even before the festival, had promised, according to Danton's proposal, not to leave Paris before tyranny had been overthrown; and on the evening of the 14th inst., they appointed a Committee, which subsequently became the leading authority in the insurrection. Their numbers gradually increased to about 5,000, mostly aban-

doned persons, who knew very little of the Statesmen of the Gironde, but were all the more zealous in the cabarets of the Faubourgs, in forming hearty friendships with the bands of the Cordéliers; and who listened with peculiar rapture to Robespierre and Marat, as the champions of the poor. Robespierre, whose star had somewhat paled in February before the influence of the Gironde, grew more powerful every day, after the Gironde had deferred the final attack. Externally he kept up a close connection with Danton and Marat, but he had not much trouble in securing for himself a separate and independent position by the side of them. While Marat talked of nothing but blood and murder, treachery and punishment; while Danton collected all his strength for a violent and sudden outbreak; Robespierre sought to work by parliamentary means, which, like the Gironde, he preferred to arms, although for other reasons, and with opposite views. Danton worked for actual anarchy, more from love of pleasure than ambition, and used no other means than his armed banditti. Robespierre had not the word pleasure in his vocabulary, but the impulse was strong in him to rise preeminent and alone, in importance, popularity and power; so that he more easily pardoned an opponent than a rival. He was not willing to trust his life and his power to the hazard of a street fight, but desired to secure a firm basis for his rule by means of legal organization. Danton well understood how to collect a band of ruffians from all the dens of crime in France; but Robespierre could devise a constitution, in which this band might exercise a lasting and regulated dominion over France. As, in the first period of the Revolution, he had proclaimed the virtue and the rights of the oppressed proletaries, so, in the second period, he created the legal forms in which their supremacy was to manifest itself, and founded upon these forms his own unexampled power. In the Jacobin Club, he discussed this subject in all its parts with indefatigable zeal. Besides urging upon its members the question of the moment—the get-

ting rid of Lafayette and Louis XVI.—he constantly discussed the proposition, that for the future also neither King, Parliament nor General, should exercise any governing power, but the mass of individual, free, and sovereign citizens alone. When, in this way, the great mass of the people had got the upper hand, the actual power would of itself fall to those proletaries who formed, not indeed the most numerous, but the only organised party.

The neediest citizens, however, were not only to be the ruling class in the French State; Danton and Robespierre intended to transfer to them the property of the rich, and Marat's friends aimed at the entire annihilation of existing society. No one among the Jacobins supported these views more energetically than Billaud-Varennes, the son of a poor advocate at La Rochelle, who, when a youth, had run away from his father's house with a maid-servant; had then for a time gone on to the stage; and had at last been driven out of his native place for writing a scandalous pamphlet. Hunger then drove him into the Congregation de l'Oratoire at Paris, where he trained himself as a teacher; and though he did not become a priest, he contracted all the bad qualities of the priestly character. He had as much ambition and self-love as Robespierre himself; his previous life had set him at variance with the law and with society, and, feeling himself an outcast, he looked forward to the time when he could revenge himself on the virtuous and respectable world. In the monastery he had learned to hide his passions behind a serious and unctuous demeanour; he recited, with uplifted eyes, bombastic panegyrics on Louis XVI., and managed to creep into the favour of his superiors. Yet he was found out at last, and was dismissed the college for composing some indecent verses. Again he fell into want; his malignity assumed a darker hue, his wrath became more venomous, and in this state of mind the Revolution found him. He now threw away all his old sneaking arts of hypocrisy, and plunged into the political troubles with all

the zeal of long pent-up revenge. He seldom appeared in the rostra, because his style of speaking was neither clever nor enthusiastic enough to attract the masses; on which account Desmoulins called him a right-angled politician—a joke which Billaud never forgave. But in the secrecy of the Committee, he was the very man to hatch proposals, the severity of which made even Cordéliers recoil, and to deduce from Robespierre's hypotheses the most terrible conclusions. Danton had already advocated a measure of relief for the poor in respect to taxation; but Billaud demanded that the cost of the new revolution should be defrayed from the property of its opponents. The *modus operandi* seemed to him simple enough—*viz.* dismissing all officers, civil officials, and judges—transporting the enemies of freedom, and confiscating their property.

We must, however, allow one virtue in this gloomy terrorist. After the year 1789, he never concealed his desires beneath theoretical and sentimental flowers of oratory; and was never induced by personal interest to desert his colours. He laboured incessantly to carry extreme measures. Whoever approached him found him at all times heated with passion, and the very clumsiness of his manners seemed only to enhance the weight of his personal influence. It was this, especially, which distinguished him from a colleague of almost identical views, Collot d'Herbois, the Lyonese actor, who, like Billaud, determined to recruit his strength, after all the miseries of his starving life, with the blood of respectable society, but who concealed all his passions behind an imperturbable and impenetrable reserve. He had first made his name more generally known among the patriots, by writing a new political catechism for the peasants; thousands of copies of which were distributed by the Jacobins, under the title of "Conversations of Father Gerhard." The ministerial crisis of March soon followed, and Collot considered himself already a personage of so much importance, that he offered his services to the Gironde,—first as Minister of the Interior,

and then as Government Commissioner for the Colonies. Brissot had the bad tact to dismiss the patriotic player with a shrug of the shoulders, whereupon Collot began to persecute the Gironde with the most furious denunciations. Of all the Jacobins he had decidedly the greatest talent for intrigue; no one understood so well as he, how to throw a party into confusion, or to form it anew. He possessed in the highest perfection the qualities necessary for his career; insolent selfishness, cool brutality, shameless flattery, and, above all, an unfathomable reserve. In ordinary circumstances, even under a democratic government, his character and knowledge would never have raised him above the lowest offices in the commonwealth; but now, when the whole state of things fell daily more and more into the hands of the rude masses, he had a future before him, in which his name was to become the terror of France.

The more openly and seriously these tendencies manifested themselves among the Jacobins,—the more decidedly these leaders bound the *Fédérés* and the men of St. Antoine to themselves—the more lukewarm, as we may easily suppose, did the Girondists become in the prosecution of their plans of subversion. It is true that they had themselves, on numberless occasions, lauded every thing which the Jacobins now demanded, and employed the populace zealously enough as a means of carrying on their new revolution; but when once the Robespierre party openly demanded the annihilation of civilised society, they almost without exception felt themselves to be members of the threatened class. Not one of them could make up his mind to go into the pot-houses of the Halles, and drink fraternity there with the *Fédérés;* and yet they knew in their hearts, that this was the only means of keeping the revolution in their own hands, and preventing their deadly enemies from seizing the reins of power. The murky atmosphere of the Jacobin Club, filled with the scent of blood, became every hour more intolerable to them; and they had now arrived at a point at which the Revolution

went beyond, not their conscience perhaps, but at any rate their taste. They saw that it was not the King alone whom they had brought into danger; and they were impatient to see whether he would subject himself to them in the interest of their common defence. Vergniaud already began to complain of the disturbances of the 20th, and the Committee of of Twelve declared on the 19th, that they could discover no grounds for impeaching Lafayette on account of his late appearance in Paris. But though the Jacobins raged furiously at this treacherous desertion of the Girondists to the King, Louis XVI. himself seemed quite insensible to it, and Roland waited in vain, from day to day, for a summons to the palace. When all chance of such a summons seemed over, the Gironde even resolved to make the first advances. On the 20th, Vergniaud, Guadet and Gensonné, sent up a memorial to the King through the Court painter, Boze, in which they emphatically recommended the formation of a Girondist Ministry, as the sole means of deliverance.[1]

How great was their disappointment and rage, when, on the 21st, Louis once more bestowed Roland's former post on a Feuillant, Champion; entrusted the ministry of the Marine to Dubouchage; and lastly, on the 23rd, appointed d'Abancourt Minister at war, promising at the same time to fill up the other appointments with all speed. Roland was beside himself with rage. The first bitterness of feeling found vent in a fresh order to the Marseillois to accelerate their march to Paris, and a violent attack by Guadet on Lafayette, whom he charged with having (through the mediation of Bureau Puzy) called on Marshall Luckner to march on Paris. Hereupon the National Assembly ordered a new investigation, in which the three officers concerned, in accordance with the actual state of the case, unanimously denied the truth of

[1] Guadet (nephew of the Deputy), *Les Girondins*, I. 262, states that his uncle was summoned to the King, and listened to in a friendly manner. But even his *viva voce* counsels were not productive of any result.

the charge. The Girondists too, after this first ebullition of feeling, began to cool down. General Montesquiou, whom they had themselves promoted to the command of the army of the South, and on whom they had reckoned in all their subversive plans, was now in Paris. He was still their ally, and was just at this time anxious, to retain through their influence, the 20 battalions which Lajard had demanded of him for the Rhenish frontier. With regard to the Republic, his answer to "the Twelve" was dry enough. "You may pronounce the deposition of the King in Paris, but be assured that you will then have neither officer nor soldier." This was saying a little too much, as the soldiers had just as little monarchical as republican zeal, but it was quite sufficient to quench the ardour of the Girondist party.

The chiefs of the party now pursued their course according to circumstances, without any general plan. In some of them anger against the King prevailed over all other considerations, and on the 25th Gensonné brought a bill before the National Assembly, which aimed at nothing less than a revolutionary government, to be carried on immediately by a parliamentary majority. By this law the Municipality was to receive the right of apprehending every man who was dangerous to the safety of the State, and to leave him for a year in prison. The office of seeing these measures carried out was to be entrusted to a Committee of the National Assembly. If this law passed, the question—which of the parties was to carry off France, as its prize, out of the revolutionary struggles—would be decided by the issue of the contest for the Municipal authority. In respect to Paris, the extreme Left had secured their influence by instituting, after the 17th of July, a so-called "Correspondence Office," of the forty-eight Sections; whose members were chosen by very irregular elections, and—belonging without exception to the most violent Jacobins,—were ready, during the approaching insurrection, to take the place of the regular Authorities as a revolution-

ary Municipality.[1] This party took further steps in the same direction in the National Assembly itself, by declaring, on the 25th, the sittings of all the Sections in the Empire permanent; and by passing a law, on the 29th, to admit the non-voters to do duty in the National guard once a month.

But other Girondists were made still more doubtful as to the course to be pursued, by these extreme measures of their colleagues. A second time Boze received a letter addressed to the King; and Vergniaud spoke from the rostra of those thoughtless people, who by their excesses—*i. e.* by a proposition to depose the king—ruined the best cause. Brissot even demanded the punishment of regicides as well as of Emigrés; since, he said, the blood of a king had never strengthened liberty but monarchy. When, therefore, Guadet openly proposed an address to Louis XVI. praying for the recall of the Girondist ministry—and both Right and Left had united with equal zeal against it—Brissot rose once more, and denounced the excesses which justified the King in complaining, on his side, of a breach of the constitution, and drove the wealthier class throughout the whole of France into the arms of foreigners. He was applauded by the Assembly, but the galleries howled, abused the double-tongued traitor, and threw fruit in his face. In the Jacobin club, there was but one unanimous voice of contempt against the miserable party, which had no other object in view in the Revolution, than to secure for their partisans Ministerial appointments. The Committee of the *Fédérés* were in favour of making use of the arrival of a red-hot patriotic battalion from Brest, to deal a decisive blow. But when Péthion heard of it, he hastened to disperse the crowds, and to throw his influence into the scale of order.

It was the last time; for on the 28th the King declared in positive terms that he would never agree to the proposals of the Gironde.[2] About the same time, the manifesto of the

[1] Mortimer-Ternaux, II. 138. — [2] Bertrand.

Allied Powers was published,[1] which threatened the Girondists just as much as the other Jacobins, and breathed towards the whole of France nothing but revenge and chastisement. Retreat, as the chiefs of the Girondist party declared, was no longer possible. "If we did once wish to pause," said one of them, "we are now compelled to drive the people to break down all the bridges behind them, and to bind the nation to us in indissoluble bonds.[2]" The Gironde endeavoured to come to some decision as to the most practically feasible and effectual mode of proceeding; but were not even now entirely unanimous. Some members of the party wished to uphold the monarchy, and only to change the person of the monarch. In their opinion, Louis XVI. ought to be removed, and his deposition pronounced. The Dauphin would then succeed, and the Gironde would compose the Council of Regency. The summoning of a National Convention to revise the law seemed indispensable; but they intended to secure a majority beforehand, by declaring two-thirds of the present Deputies members of the new Assembly,[3] Condorcet was to be the Tutor of the young King, Péthion President of the Regency, and Roland, Servan and Clavière, Ministers. On the other hand, Vergniaud declared that it was a folly and a crime any longer to reject the *beau ideal* of freedom—the republican form of government. He demanded a National Convention for the very purpose of ordaining the abolition of monarchy; and therefore did not advocate a deposition of Louis—which would involve the succession of the Dauphin to the throne—but the suspension of the King, as the first step to the overthrow of monarchy. Important as these differences of opinion were, they did not, for the moment, tend to check the revolutionary progress of the party, as the removal of Louis formed the immediate and common object of the movement; and on this point a definite reso-

[1] Buchez. — [2] Beaulieu. — [3] Prudhomme (Crimes, &c.), quotes a bill to this effect of Aug. 10th.

lution was now come to. In spite of all the difficulties which stood in their way, they found at last as many encouragements as drawbacks. For whence was the King to derive the means of resistance, after the withdrawal of the troops of the line? Though the armies were not altogether favourably disposed, they would hardly allow themselves to be incited to an act of violence, if a constitutional decree should pronounce the abdication of the King. Everything depended on preventing a scandalous popular tumult, and thus, on the one hand, deprive the Generals of a pretext for reaction, and the Cordéliers, on the other, of the possibility of creating anarchy. It was just on the 29th, that the notorious battalion of Marseillois arrived, which was entirely under the influence of Barbaroux, who intended, on the very first day of his arrival, to extort the decree of deposition from the National Assembly. On this occasion, however, he was left in the lurch by Santerre, and his plan failed; but the Marseillois had still great influence with the democrats, and the Gironde hoped by their means to be able to employ the other *Fédérés*—5,300 in number—on the 30th of July, for the execution of their schemes; after which, they intended to remove them as quickly as possible out of Paris, and the sphere of the Cordéliers.[1] Péthion indulged the brightest hopes; "I see," he said, "that I shall not be able to escape being Regent."[2]

There was need, truly, of all the ambition and self-complacency which characterised Péthion and his friends, to deck the strength of their position with such dreams. Those who had so little confidence in their league with the Cordéliers that, only eight days before, they had twice allowed themselves to be frightened into humiliating negotiations with Louis XVI., ought, least of all, to have deceived them-

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[1] With this view Lasource, on the 29th, demanded in the Jacobin Club that the *Fédérés* should be marched off to the frontiers. — [2] Beaulieu—according to the statements of ear-witnesses.

selves so grossly. It became continually more and more evident that the state of the country was one in which only an organised military force could effect anything. Such a force the kingdom did, indeed, possess in its army; but it was occupied on the frontiers against the Germans. The revolution, too, had such a force in the proletaries of the Jacobin Club; but in Paris these last were on the side of the Cordéliers; and even in the provinces they only remained faithful to the Gironde where they were still imperfectly informed of its disagreement with Danton and Robespierre. Moral and legal powers no longer existed, for the law and the mechanism of the State had lost all influence. The civil Authorities and the National guard were powerless, divided among themselves, or reactionary. In addition to this, the financial prospects became continually gloomier. The financial condition of the Kingdom might, more than anything else, have opened the eyes of the Gironde to the fact, that the authors of the revolutionary war, in turning their backs on the communistic democracy, were disowning their own offspring. For in the existing dissolution of all internal relations, it was the war above all things that swallowed up countless sums, which could only be raised by means of *assignats*. But the increase of *assignats* naturally led to fresh confiscations, and a universal forced currency, and these again to the transference of all property to the State—in other words, to communism.

The beginning of the war had occasioned—besides severe prohibitive duties, and insolvency as regards the creditors of the *ancien régime*—an addition of 600 millions to the *assignats*. By the end of July these sums were exhausted, and the course of exchange for paper money since February stood at 70—60 per cent; the State therefore had used, in the half-year, about 330 millions for its current expenses. Paper money to the amount of 2,400 millions had already been issued, and the security of the Church property was far exceeded. According to the last report, presented in

May, Church lands had been sold for 1800 millions, and the remainder, still unsold, was not worth more than 350 millions;[1] so that *assignats* had been issued to an amount of 200 millions more than the entire value of the Church property. Fresh paper money being now required, it was necessary to find new and large security. Fouquet, however, who presented the report on the 31st July, began to show some scruples, and a brief review of the consequences of the preceding financial administration will prove that his apprehensions were not without sufficient grounds.

The sale of the Church lands had not begun to proceed favourably till the spring of 1791, and it went on most rapidly immediately after the completion of the constitution; when, within four weeks, offers were made to the extent of 500 millions.[2] But the party feuds of the legislators, and, still more, the breaking out of the war, paralyzed the sale at once. The next seven months only produced 360 millions, and it was to be expected that every increase of internal or external complications would render the case more and more unfavourable. The evil was aggravated by the fact that these numbers by no means expressed a corresponding diminution in the paper circulation; for the laws, which offered every possible temptation to buyers, fixed a very distant day of payment; and, up to May, only 488 out of the 1800 millions had been paid into the Exchequer;—and subsequently about 30 millions a month was liquidated. It is only by the help of these facts, that we can explain the large sum of 2,200 millions which were stated to be the proceeds of the sales of Church property; while under ordinary circumstances it would not have fetched more than 1300 millions. As, after February, the *assignats* stood about one third below par;[3]— the lands had been really disposed of for

[1] We have given all these sums in round numbers. Reports of April 5th, April 19th, May 23d. — [2] At the close of the Constituent Assembly 964 millions, and by the middle of October, 1440 millions had been sold by auction. — [3] *I. e.* in Paris; in the provinces they were lower.

1600 millions, and this price was dearly paid for by the excessive subdivision and exhaustion of the lands. What would be the consequence, if they continued to add to the mass of paper money in ever increasing proportions, and, at the same time, kept down the price of land by the constant accumulation of new objects of sale.

There were, moreover, other circumstances to be taken into consideration. The management of the national domains was as bad as it had been two years before. From the Spring of 1790 to May 1792, only a total income of 44 millions had been derived from them; whereas formerly the Clergy had received a yearly revenue of 70 millions, and the Government of 11—12 millions. Since February 1792, the estates of the Emigrés—the extent of which was originally equal to that of the Church lands, and was daily increasing, —were thrown into the same condition. By virtue of the sequestration they, like the Church lands, were under the superintendence of the Municipalities. During this year, as far as was practicable, the former stewards were allowed to continue their management, for the benefit of the State; while the moveable property was seized and sold by auction. We may easily conjecture how much disorder, embezzlement, and deterioration of the estates must have been the result. In one place the stewards enriched themselves; in another they allowed everything to go to ruin, and sometimes found means to send the revenues into foreign parts to their fugitive lords. When the crops were brought in, in the autumn, the fresh tillage of the land was every where neglected. In a land like France, which at that time could scarcely raise corn enough for home consumption, it was no trifle that one-twentieth of its arable land was as good as uncultivated.

Such was the case with the lands which the State had kept in its own hands. In the domains which had been sold, the prospects were also far from encouraging. Even at that time, the remarkable fact was brought to light, that the de-

mocratic plan of the Constituent Assembly of creating, by a division of the land, a number of small proprietors, had entirely failed. The accumulation of landed estates was not less in 1792 than in 1788. The great properties were differently grouped, and the owners changed, but the *number* of proprietors was not increased. The small proprietors,—the poor people who had been eager to buy land in 1791—had for the most part been ruined. He who had not already succumbed in the winter, was made a beggar by the disturbances which preceded the declaration of war. Speculation and stock-jobbing did the rest; in short, the greater part of the Church lands was now in the hands of city capitalists, the great majority of whom, like the former owners, never saw their possessions—allowed the same mode of farming to continue—and collected their rents by means of hardhearted agents.

The result is very remarkable, though it has been but little noticed. How often has the Revolution been praised, for having thrown the large estates held *in mortmain* into the energetic management of small proprietors; or complained of, by the opposite party, as having commenced that crumbling of the land which was completed by the Code Napoleon. We have already had occasion to remark, that the extent of land occupied by small farms was just as great before the Revolution, as it is in the present day; and we now see the explanation of such a uniformity even amidst the revolutionary storms. The consideration of this fact, as well as of all the financial convulsions of that period, carries us back to the general principle, which is even now too frequently mistaken. The distribution of wealth follows, in the long run, the same laws as its production. Every actual increase of the latter leads at last to its more suitable distribution; and every attempt to control this distribution by human interference, however well intended, is at the best impotent, and injuriously affects production and circulation, and, consequently, the well-being of all classes. The vicissi-

tudes of the French soil since 1789 correspond in every respect to this proposition. The 4th of August enriched agriculture in all its departments, because it emancipated labour, and increased production. Neither the division of the Church lands, nor the subsequent sale of the Emigrés' property, increased the number of proprietors; but amid the general anarchy they reduced not only the rich prelate, but, in still more disastrous a manner, the small farmer, to beggary. Similar statements might be maintained respecting the present state of affairs and its causes. It is not the divisibility of estates,—the prohibition of which would be a limitation of the rights of property and of freedom, and therefore of prosperity—which is the source of existing evils; for the alleged breaking-up of estates is much older than the Code Napoleon. But it is the obstacles still thrown in the way of credit, production and sale; the limitation of the powers of testators, the custom of paying rent in kind, the protective duties, and the bank monopoly. To bring about a 4th of August for these things is the proper task of the French Economist, and not the invention of new schemes for the division of land, whether in the direction of feudalism or socialism.

As early as 1792, France bitterly felt the consequences of the attempt on the part of the State to create small proprietors. Most alarming reports were received from all quarters respecting the deficiency of the crop, and the worst accounts of all came once more from the Centre and South of the Kingdom. The condition of the tenants at fixed money rents, in the provinces bordering on Belgium and Germany, was somewhat better; but these too could not conceal from themselves, that they would not long be able to struggle against the general ruin. In Alsace, even the memory of the old German Empire began to revive; and its mouldering constitution seemed to the country people like a blessing, in comparison with French disorders. In general, however, it was the threatening vicinity of the enemy's country which

kept up the revolutionary feeling among the peasants; they had indeed, if possible, a worse idea of the German barbarians, than the Germans of 1848 of a Russian intervention; and, above all, they gnashed their teeth at the thought of tithes and Seigniorial rights, which they regarded as inseparable from a victory of the Prussians. They would have had no other objection to make, if Louis XVI. had once more seized the reins of power.

The disordered state of agriculture necessarily caused an alarming reaction in all directions. It became more and more difficult to provide the towns with bread; for the yield of the land diminished, and the owners themselves abolished the money rents, on account of the fluctuations of the *assignats*. They received the rent in corn, which they stored up, in hope of better prices; and often did not even thrash it, to save the cost of labour. Then the prohibition of the export of wool produced its effect. The breeding of sheep came to an end; and in the Autumn, complaints were sent up from all quarters that there was an utter deficiency of wool. This of, course, produced in turn a still greater deterioration of the land under plough; and thus one evil increased the other. The most flourishing cattle-breeding in the kingdom was that of La Vendée, where the peasants used their farms for hardly anything but pasture, and very advantageously deposited their gains in the hands of the Seignior. The increase of *assignats* and the persecution of the nobility deranged this prosperous state of things. The peasants of this province, warmly attached to the Church, and on that account discontented, were furious against the Revolution; and in July, the first really formidable royalist conspiracy against the new order of things was formed. Paris felt the injurious change, first of all in respect to the means of life; as the supply of meat, which was furnished in great part from this province, began to fail. Bread, meat, and clothing, had already become scarce, and now, as the Autumn approached, fuel also began to disappear. It

is true that even under the *ancien régime* the way in which the forests were used was everywhere ruinous and destructive; but the long-existing abuse was rendered infinitely worse by the absence of all legal control. The forests were the last remnant—the sole untouched portion—of the Church property; in these all kinds of vandalic devastations were practised; and the Committee of Finance, in their helplessness, began to cast greedy eyes upon them.

Under such circumstances, the condition of the wealthier classes was necessarily a very depressed one; while that of the working men was altogether desperate. Every article of consumption had become dearer; and though wages were also high, they had not risen in proportion. The increase of the circulating medium was, indeed, the chief cause of the alteration in prices, but by no means the only one; for the degree in which the price of each article rose was modified by the demand for it, and the rate of its production. The rise in the value of gold and silver was owing to the paper-money, and was accelerated by the export of the precious metals to the Emigrés, the melting down of coin, and, above all, the operations of the Treasury, which—under Narbonne, for instance—bought up large sums for the exigencies of the war, whatever might be the cost. The decrease in the rate of production, moreover, combined with the excessive issues of paper, to raise the price of most of the necessaries of life. The course of things was just the reverse in respect to wages. While the increase in the circulating medium tended to raise them, the annihilation of luxury, and the disastrous condition of the manufactories, had an equal effect in keeping them down. This was most felt in Paris, where, side by side with greatly enhanced prices of goods, the daily wages were the same in the Autumn of 1792, as they had been four years before—*viz.* 15 *sous* a day.

We have thus traced the results of the revolutionary art of finance in every part of social life. Confiscations, prohibitions, and, *assignats*, combined to blight the fields, to desolate

the pastures, and to condemn the hand of the artificer to inaction. The State saw the booty it had seized quickly vanish from its grasp. Was it still to go on in its ruinous course, insatiable, and ever condemned to the pangs of hunger?

But how to find a way of escape? The demands on the public purse were continually accumulating, and of regular sources of income there existed only the faintest traces. How could the peasants—whose stock of cattle was ruined, whose implements had grown dearer, whose market carts were plundered, and whose gains, at the best, were paid in falling paper money—keep up the full and regular payment of an excessively heavy tax? And when the wages of all the working classes were diminished, when the wealthy were terrified, and every kind of luxury was proscribed;—when the merchants saw one market closed to them by the war, and another by the inadmissibility of their mode of payment;—how could it be wondered at, that the customs, at the end of the year, furnished only 12 instead of 22 millions? In the depth of the disorder into which the State had sunk, there was no conceivable means of effecting an immediate cure. There was but one way open to the Government, and that was to retrace the steps already taken on the path of Revolution, and, above all, to make peace with Germany. This was to be had at any moment,—and with it a saving of 80 millions a month—through a *bona fide* agreement with the King, on the basis of an adequate revision of the constitution. Lafayette had at last made up his mind to this, and in conjunction with Luckner had proposed this course to the Ministers. Louis replied, that he was thoroughly inclined to peace, if he did but dare to utter the word in Paris. The other alternative was a more resolute progress in the path of piracy, continual fresh issues of paper money, more and more extensive confiscations, and, when there was nothing more to be found in France, an extension of the war, in order to add the treasures of foreign countries to the

plunder of France. The Jacobins and the Cordéliers had decided for the latter course, and had therefore every reason to rejoice in the embarrassments of the Treasury as the best means of agitation.

Between these parties stood the Gironde, as undecided as Lafayette had been two years before, and in a constant struggle of opposing wishes. They were little inclined to aid in the completion of the vandalism aimed at by the Jacobins, but they abhorred every step towards peace as a disgrace. The financial statement of the 31st of July clearly expresses their undecided state of mind. This report fully explains that a new emission of paper money was in fact impossible, and yet concludes with a demand for the creation of 300 millions of *assignats*. It further states that the sale of the Emigrants' lands would rather depress than raise the value of paper, and yet does not conceal the wish to see such a rich source of ready money made accessible. It urgently warns them not to lay hands on the most valuable property of the State, namely the forests; and yet, at last, begs to be allowed to sell a portion of them to the value of 200 millions! One of the Deputies asked why they did not rather confiscate the property of the Knights of Malta. "You may console yourself on that point," replied Cambon, "their turn will come soon enough, when the 300 millions have been spent." And thus the sale of the forests and the fresh issue of paper were resolved upon.

The democrats derived from all these measures a fresh impulse to hasten towards the final *dénouement*. They made themselves every day more and more certain of the support of the *Fédérés*, and continually sketched more precise plans for a violent catastrophe, which should overthrow the hopes of the Gironde, as well as the throne of the King. In the secret sittings which were held for this object in various pot-houses of the Faubourgs, some adherents of the Gironde were present,—*viz.* Barbaroux and the Journalists Carra and Gorsas; Péthion, likewise, from his official position, was aware

of their plans. However, none of the disputed points were discussed on this occasion. The leaders, Danton and Robespierre, as well as Brissot and Roland, were kept away by care for their personal safety. They did not discuss the use to be made of their victory, but only the attack upon royalty, the day of rising, the formation of the columns, and the direction of the march to the Tuileries. The Gironde had thus far no objection to make, as they, too, considered an armed demonstration necessary to extort the decree of deposition from the majority of the National Assembly. The Court was thoroughly instructed respecting all these machinations, but was without means of opposing them; since the Departmental Authorities had resigned, after the *cassation* of their judgments, and the other Civil Authorities of the capital were at the head of the conspiracy. The King therefore, in order to gain time, was induced once more to try the effect of bribery on the chiefs of his enemies. Danton (and his friends Santerre and Lacroix,) Péthion and Brissot are mentioned among those who were tempted.[1] And, if one

[1] Danton was tempted by Bertrand, Lafayette and Mirabeau; Péthion by Hue and Beaulieu; Lacroix by Soulavie, according to a communication of the Minister Chambonas; Brissot and other Girondists by Montmorin; Santerre by Bertrand, according to the testimony of Princess Elisabeth and Gilliers. All such accounts ought to be very cautiously received; but it is not worth while to discuss them singly. In respect to Danton, however, we may here remark that Bougeart (Danton, 393) rejects Lafayette's testimony, because, according to the latter, the bribery consisted in the purchase of his advocateship, which being worth 10,000 francs was paid for by the King with 100,000. Bougeart states that the value of such a post was 60,000 according to a memorial sent in to the National Assembly by the *avocats du Roi*, in which they claim this compensation for the abolition of their offices. But it is evident that this is no proof of the value of the post, nor does it detract from the credit of Lafayette's statement, though he may have exaggerated the insignificance of the value. Bougeart takes no notice of other witnesses, and Louis Blanc has already remarked that Mirabeau's testimony, especially, decides the question against Danton.

may trust the reports of their opponents, some of them took the money, but did not keep their promises; and the others had too trifling offers made them to bind them to the King. The Jacobins were immediately seized with violent suspicion; on the 1st of August, Brissot and Vergniaud were loudly accused of treachery from the rostra of the Jacobin club; and Robespierre demanded that no member of the two preceding Assemblies should be allowed to enter the new Convention. Whatever may be the truth respecting these attempts at bribery, it is certain that no settlement was arrived at. The friends of the King recurred to the idea of a flight into Normandy, but without being able to induce Louis XVI. to agree to it; while the Gironde allowed free course to the intrigues of the Parisian revolutionists.

These machinations were now at their height. The decree of the 25th, by which the sittings of the Sections were declared permanent had cleared the way.[1] Little effort was now needed to carry the most savage decrees. This was generally done by about a tenth of those who had a right to vote, late in the night, when the good citizens remained at home from motives of ease or fear; and, very often, by the aid of the non-voters, whom no one any longer dared to exclude from the Sectional assemblies. On the 28th, Carra announced that 47 of the Sections were in favour of deposing the King. On the 31st, the Section Mauconseil declared, on its own responsibility, that it no longer acknowledged the traitor Louis as King, and that on the 5th, it would lay this resolution (which was passed by about 600 votes) before the National Assembly. On the 3rd, the Faubourgs St. Antoine and St. Marceau signified the same intention; they would appear, they said, at the bar of the Assembly

[1] Practically speaking this decree came into operation immediately, although it was not ratified till the 28th, and announced by the Mayor on the 6th of August.

in arms, and call on the Marseillois to accompany them. About the same time Péthion, as chief of the Sectional Commissioners, appeared before the Assembly to demand, in the name of the capital, the deposition of Louis. His address was prudently vague in regard to what was to follow; he only demanded the summoning of a Convention, and, until it should meet, the nomination by the Assembly of a provisional Ministry; since, he said, it was impossible to know whether the nation would adhere to the present dynasty or not. The way was thus left open to the hopes of all parties —to the friends of a Regency in the name of Louis XVI.— to the partisans of the Duke of Orleans—and the admirers of a Republic. Similar proposals flowed in from all the clubs of the Provinces; and the Jacobins hoped to carry out their designs on the 5th August. On this day, the Marseillois, who had hitherto been quartered in St. Antoine, were to be removed into barracks near the club of the Cordéliers, where they fell completely into Danton's hands; and it was this removal which the Section Mauconseil and the Faubourgs had in view, when they passed their resolutions. The directing Committee held a meeting on this point during the night of the 4th. It appeared however, on the one hand, that the arming of the Faubourgs was not yet completed, and, on the other, the Gironde expressed a strong desire not to proceed without a decree of the National Assembly, which had fixed the 9th for discussing the question of the deposition. The struggle was therefore deferred, and the Jacobins contented themselves by setting a constant watch over the Tuileries by means of patrols of the *Fédérés* and the men of the Faubourgs, to hinder any attempt at flight on the part of the King. The Faubourg St. Antoine, moreover, resolved to wait for the decision of the National Assembly until 11 o'clock on the evening of the 9th; and if nothing proper, they said, was done up to that time "the tocsin should be rung at midnight, the general march beat, and a rising *en masse* take place." The Faubourg St. Monceau and the *Fédérés*

were forthwith informed of this; and on the following day Commissioners were sent off to the other 46 Sections to discuss further measures. Every preparation had been made for action. The police of the Commune had distributed 50,000 ball cartridges since the 25th,—*viz.* 3,000 to St. Marceau, 4,000 to a Section of the Faubourg St. Antoine, 5,000 to the Marseillois,[1] &c. On the other hand, the Commander-in-chief of the National Guard had been unable to obtain from the Municipality any ammunition for the use of the battalion which had been called out for the maintenance of order.[2]

Meanwhile the National Assembly had come to a resolution on the 7th of August concerning the charges brought against Lafayette. On the 29th of July the Committee of Twelve had been instructed to give a report on the evidence of Bureau Puzy within eight days; and Jean Debry now moved, in the name of the Committee, that the General should be impeached. During the last few weeks the great mass of the impartial Deputies, through fear of the galleries, had unresistingly voted with the Left; and the Gironde still reckoned on their submissiveness. But the rapid progress which the Demagogues had made of late, and the frankness with which their plans were brought to light, began to produce a reaction. The majority of these people had formed their political creed on Lafayette's model. They were not indeed prevented thereby from voting, according to circumstances, for democratic or anarchical measures, but to ask them to destroy with their own hands the cherished idol of their hearts was too much, and the impeachment of Lafayette was rejected by 406 to 224. This vote was followed by a decided rupture between the two Sections of the Left. The Gironde justly concluded that the feeling of the majority left no hope of carrying the

[1] *Revue Retrospective.* Panis signed thus; *bon et très bon à délivrer.* — [2] Roederer, *Cinquante Jours.* Péthion himself confesses (*Pièces intéressantes pour l'histoire, 1793*), that he desired the insurrection but dreaded its failure. He says that his duty as a citizen was to promote freedom, and as a magistrate to observe the forms of law.

deposition of the King immediately; and since they were determined to remain in their present quasi-legal position, they resolved to postpone the catastrophe, and meanwhile caused a number of preliminary questions to be brought forward by the twelve for the decision of the Assembly. The Cordéliers and Jacobins, of course, were delighted that no means were now left but to resort to physical force. "The parliamentary majority fails us—well then, let us march over the heads of the majority! The National Assembly refuses to take the lead in the overthrow of the throne—all the better!—then we will create another central Authority, whose democracy shall be of a very different kind." If they succeeded in this, not only would the King, but the Gironde itself, be annihilated, in the very moment of victory.

Immediately after the conclusion of the sitting, the mob of the galleries fell upon the Deputies of the majority, maltreated them at the door of the Hall, forced their way into their houses, and threatened to murder them if they ever showed themselves in the rostra again. In the evening, the managing Committee of the *Fédérés* held their last meeting in a pot-house of St. Antoine,[1] and Committees of correspondence held sittings in all the Sections.[2] The Jacobins were indefatigable in carrying round orders, and holding men of similar views with themselves in readiness. Yet the results of their exertions were at first but small. Hardly ten of the metropolitan Sectional Assemblies were inclined to the revolt; on the contrary, the great majority were disposed to peace and quietness.[3] Towards 7 clock, however, the leaders declared that 13 Sections had signified their assent, and they opened the decisive discussion in the Sectional Assembly of St. Antoine. First came a message from

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[1] Carra. — [2] Beaulieu. Gorsas. — [3] Mortimer-Ternaux, II. 228, has proved from the minutes of all the Sections that the statement in the protocol of the Quinze-Vingt Section—concerning this agreement of the 13 Sections (Buchez, XVI. 407)—was a lie.

the *Fédérés* reminding them of the resolution of the 4th, and warning them to adhere to it steadfastly; then a proposition was made, that every Section should name three Commissioners, who should all unite at the Hotel de Ville, and cooperate in the salvation of the country. A decree was then passed; to the effect that obedience should be paid to this revolutionary body alone; the three Commissioners were chosen, and tidings of what had passed despatched to the other Sections.

It was a mean room in the workmen's quarter of Paris, in which a few hundred people of the lowest class, under the presidency of an old Judges' clerk, Huguenin, carried on these nocturnal discussions. In such secrecy and obscurity arose a Dictatorship, which for two years was to trample all that France contained of life and property, blood and money, beneath its iron heel.

At midnight the tocsin began to sound, first in the Cordélier's quarter, then in the Faubourgs, and soon in every part of the city. The timid portion of the community put their heads under the bed-clothes—the men of action in the party of order hastened to their battalions—and the Jacobins were sole masters of the field in the assemblies. The total number of voters is stated at 600;[1] they were not long in choosing their Commissioners, who during the night gradually made their appearance at the Hotel de Ville. Here they found the existing Municipality assembled, with the Jacobinical Professor Cousin as president, and surrounded by a Jacobin mob in the strangers' gallery. Under these circumstances, the revolutionary Commissioners found no difficulty in opening their session, (again under the presidency of Huguenin) by the side of the legal Authorities, or in dictating their will to them as long as they were allowed to exist. At first they were not quite at their ease; their numbers

[1] By Bertrand de Moleville. The details which Mortimer-Ternaux (II. 235) adds from the Sectional protocols are in perfect agreement with this. In the Arsenal Section the three Commissioners were elected by *six* citizens.

filled up slowly, and the morning broke before 27 Sections were represented.[1] In addition to this, intelligence arrived that the concourse of armed men was smaller than had been expected. At 3 o'clock in the morning they counted only a troop of 1,500 men[2] in St. Antoine, which only very gradually increased. It was not till nearly 5 o'clock that there was any general stir in the city,[3] and the gathering of the mob became considerable. Then, moreover, differences arose[4] among them, and timid remembrances of the 20th of June came fresh into their minds; Santerre himself—whether out of regard to the money of the Civil list, or the safety of his own life—would not begin the march. Danton was in the barracks of the Marseillois, who were full of zeal; the battalion of the Cordéliers also ran eagerly to arms. A column from St. Marceau joined them after 6 o'clock, and these united forces began their march towards the Tuileries. They had to pass the Pont Neuf, which the Commander-in-chief, Mandat, had occupied with a battalion of the National Guards and two pieces of cannon. But here, too, the City Authorities had interfered; Manuel had dismissed the troops in the name of the Municipality, and their last outposts retired without resistance before the approaching insurrection.

This was an important gain for the rebellion, but it was not the last and most decisive step. The way to the Royal palace was now opened; the next step was to render the Tuileries themselves defenceless. At the urgent desire of the Sectional Commissioners, Cousin sent an order to the Commandant immediately to make his appearance at the Hôtel de Ville, to give an account to his superiors in command of the measures he had taken. Mandat, formerly a captain in the French guard, a man of liberal and constitu-

[1] Adress of the Commune to the National Assembly, Aug. 31st. Ternaux (III. 172). — [2] Blondel to Roederer. — [3] Péthion in Buchez, XVI. 445. — [4] Morning report of the (old) Municipality to the National Assembly. "The burghers of St. Antoine are not aware what the noise and riotous gatherings of the people mean."

tional principles, a strong sense of duty and soldier-like resolution, had made his preparations as well as circumstances would allow. As long as he commanded, an armed insurrection was still a dangerous thing; and the Jacobin leaders were by no means inclined to expose their cause and their persons to any risk. The General received the invitation in the Tuileries; and as no enemy was as yet to be seen, and he himself knew nothing of the proceedings at the Hôtel de Ville, he had no reason for offering resistance to the summons of his superiors. He came with his son and his adjutant. He appealed to a general command of the Mayor, issued on the 6th, to repel force by force, and was dismissed by the Municipality after a short conference. After this, however, they drew him into the Assembly of the Sectional Commissioners, secured his person, and loaded him with the most violent reproaches; telling him, that he had intended to shed the blood of the patriotic citizens. He immediately saw the fate which was preparing for him, but refused with heroic firmness to save his life by signing an order recalling the National Guard from the defence of the Tuileries. Orders were then given to apprehend him and lead him away to prison. No sooner, however, did he begin to descend the stairs of the Hôtel de Ville, than murderers fell upon him and killed him by a pistol-shot. The Commissioners then proclaimed the chief of the Faubourg St. Antoine, Santerre, as the new Commandant, and thus threw away the last mask of specious legality. In the name of the sovereign people they suspended the Communal Council, and took their places.[1]

The murder of Mandat had more effect than any other

[1] In earlier editions these proceedings were described according to the official minutes of the Commune. Mortimer-Ternaux has now proved from the original documents, that the latter were subsequently altered in the most important parts to serve the interests of the victorious party; and he has given an authentic account of the proceedings based on the original papers.

circumstance on the issue of the day, inasmuch as it deprived the defence of the Tuileries of all its unity and firmness. Mandat had drawn up round the palace sixteen divisions of the National Guard, amounting to about 3,000 men. These belonged to different battalions, who were unacquainted with one another, and divided in their political sentiments. The Artillery openly took the side of the insurrection, while the Grenadiers of St. Thomas (the wealthy citizens of the Rue Vivienne, and the Rue Richelieu) were decidedly for the King; the rest had no desire to fight at all, but would have been carried away by an energetic commander. Mandat's death crippled this civic force, and there now only remained disposable for resistance, 120 noblemen[1] in the interior of the palace, who had gathered round the King from attachment to his person, but were badly armed and entirely without discipline; and besides these a regiment of Swiss guards, to the number of 1,950 (according to the statement of Colonel Pfyffer), which was a thoroughly trustworthy and gallant body of men. They were posted in the hall of the palace, and kept the entrance from the Place du Carrousel closed by their guards. The place gradually filled with people, and soon after Mandat's departure the Marseillois and Cordéliers arrived to the number, at most, of 1,500 armed men,[2] who were joined by perhaps about double the number of curious spectators. To such minute proportions had the great struggle between the old and new eras been reduced by the apathy and exhaustion of the French State and people. For nearly an hour the hostile forces stood opposed to each other. The Marseillois were expecting the men of St. Antoine with a most lively impatience; in fact the Swiss guard would have sufficed to have dispersed them, and who knows whether in that case Santerre would

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[1] This number is given by Aubier, an eye-witness. *Vid.* letter to Mallet, in the British Mercury. — [2] 516 Marsellois and the two battalions of St. Marceau and Théatre Francais.

have made up his mind to move? An adventurer from Alsace, however, named Westermann, had gone in haste to inflame the failing courage of the masses; but he was obliged to put his sword to the breast of their broad-shouldered and pusillanimous commander, before he would give the command to set out towards the Tuileries. And thus at last the march began. The *Fédérés* led the way, then came the National Guards and the Pikemen of the Faubourgs, and among them the French Guards, who were awaiting their enrolment as gensd'armes. The column grew on its way. One battalion, which was to have barred their passage at the Hôtel de Ville, was disarmed by the death of Mandat, and the procession moved slowly on, without resistance, to the number of 15,000 men, through the narrow streets and along the quays, towards the palace. Santerre preferred to instal himself in his new dignity at the Hôtel de Ville, whither Péthion sent him repeated messages to have him (Péthion) arrested according to the agreement. At last Péthion obtained 600 men as a guard of honour, and the leaders were consistent in their cowardly caution up to the very last moment. Danton and Desmoulins were at any rate to be seen actively engaged in the streets,[1] but Robespierre, who two days before had had himself proposed to the Marseillois as Dictator,—and Marat, who on the 9th had begged Barbaroux for a safe hiding-place in Marseilles, were nowhere to be found.

To meet this formidable attack the King had only the strength to endure with composure, and this determined the issue of the struggle. Marie Antoinette alone possessed the courage of a man. The night had passed at the Tuileries in resultless counsels, and wavering expectations. The King slept for an hour, tried to rouse the spirit of the National Guard by passing them in review, but was himself exhausted and silent, and produced no effect. In the Court-yard of

[1] Journal of Madame Desmoulins.

the palace, indeed, he was received with general cheering, in which all joined but the Artillery;[1] but in the garden, he came upon a Jacobin battalion, and was followed with abuse; and he returned to the palace heated, but in a state of mental torpor, to shut himself up with his confessor. This failure was chiefly owing to want of tact on the part of Louis. For though the democratic historians, at a later period, loudly declared that a grand outbreak of all Paris brought about the 10th of August, the contemporary Revolutionists are still more unanimous in their opinion, that nothing was wanting but a show of resolution on the part of the King, to make at least half the National Guard do battle in his cause.[2] A Girondist named Rôderer, a Procureur of the Department, one of the tamest of the party, was destined to carry off the honour of completely disarming him. This man, who came forward as a zealous friend of public order, passed the night in the palace, threw obstacles in the way of all vigorous measures—such as the proclamation of martial law—and urged Mandat to go and obey the invitation of the Commune. Like Santerre, he was in great fear that the King would conquer in the battle, and then perhaps lead his troops against the National Assembly. When, therefore, the Marseillois arrived, he commenced negotiations with them, and proposed to the King that he should prevent bloodshed by placing himself under the protection of the National Assembly. The Queen violently opposed this step, and even Louis remarked that there were but few people in the Place du Carrousel. But when Rôderer declared that the Faubourgs were advancing with countless numbers,—that there were not five minutes to be lost,—that he was not merely giving advice, but must humbly *insist* on taking the Royal family with him,—Louis' firmness gave way to his

[1] Report of Langlade, Captain of Artillery. — [2] Péthion, Buchez, XIX. 441. — Barbaroux, *Mémoires* 69. — Bourdon, *Convent. Nat.* Dec. 23, 1792. —Prudhomme, *Revolutions de Paris.* Sept. 1.—Langlade, Buchez, XVII. 304. — Also the English traveller Moore, *Journal* I. 105, 143.

fears for his family, and he cried out "Let us go!" Röderer left him no time to give any further orders, and the mournful procession set out for the hall of the National Assembly. On the terrace, which he was obliged to pass, eleven royalists had been cut down an hour before by the mob, which allowed the Royal family to pass amidst a storm of savage imprecations. As the Assembly could not deliberate in the presence of the King, the gallery of the short-hand writers—a low room, ten feet square—was assigned to the fugitives as their abiding place.

The National Guard, which had wavered ever since it had been reviewed by the King, now entirely dispersed, while masses of people from St. Antoine poured from all quarters into the Place du Carrousel. The Marseillois now broke into the Court of the Palace, which was quickly filled with a roaring tide of human beings. The Swiss withdrew to the grand staircase of the palace, and were then summoned to surrender with mingled flattery and abuse. As the people pressed on them with increasing impetuosity, their Colonel at last gave the fatal order to fire. The power of discipline was now most strikingly manifested; the thickly thronging assailants fell in crowds, rushed back, and fled howling from the court. A division of the Swiss by a rapid sally cleared the Place du Carrousel, and thought that the victory was gained,[1] when a message arrived from the king, ordering them to stop firing and retire to the National Assembly.[2] The besiegers now returned to the attack with fresh zeal,

[1] Letters of Swiss Offices in Nettement, *Études sur les Girondins*, p. 119.—Napoleon, who was then in Paris, was of the same opinion. —

[2] Louis gave this order as soon as the first volley was heard. Michelet insists upon it that it was not given until Roederer had announced the taking of the Tuileries, which is indeed in accordance with the very summary account in the Moniteur. But that this is a mistake may be proved from the Moniteur itself, since it includes this announcement in the first speech of Roederer, which was delivered at 8 o'clock A. M., before a shot had been fired. The exact report of the short-hand writer shows the actual course of of things.

and redoubled their firing as that of the Swiss died away. The palace was inundated in a moment, and every male creature, down to the very kitchen-boy, massacred. All the furniture was dashed to pieces, and a great quantity of valuables stolen, or carried off to the Hôtel de Ville. The retreating column of Swiss was fired on from all sides, several detachments dispersed, and the fugitives cut down without mercy. The last remnant of them, in obedience to a fresh order from the King, delivered up their weapons to the National Guard.[1]

The Revolution was victorious, and of the former fabric of the State not one stone was left upon on another. Monarchy lay prostrate in the dust, and the Legislative Assembly only existed in appearance. No member of the majority dared to show himself, and of the 750 Deputies only 284, all belonging to the party of the Left, were present. While booty from the palace was being brought to the bar of the Assembly,—while the new Commune was announcing its entrance upon office,—and fugitive Swiss were being hunted through the passages by the pikemen,—Duhem moved the dismissal of the Ministers, and the insurgents announced that the Tuileries were in flames (some neighbouring buildings had caught fire), and would not be extingnished until the deposition of the King had been proclaimed. Vergniaud then rose in the name of the "Extraordinary Commission," to bring forward the long-prepared measure of the Gironde. It is true that the first point which it touched on was the convocation of a Convention, and that nothing was now said about the proviso, that two-thirds of this new body must be members of the present Assembly. But he further proposed, not the deposition, but the suspension of the King. He moved the formation of a new Ministry, but also the nomi-

[1] Mortimer-Ternaux (II. 325) rightly concludes his account with these words. "The Tuileries were not taken by storm, but evacuated by Louis's orders." The people had 100 killed and 60 wounded, and not 3,600 (as Lamartine absurdly states).

nation of a Tutor for the Heir to the throne; he proposed the suspension of the civil list, but also that the Assembly should assign to the King a residence in the Luxembourg, and a provisional grant of money. The new Ministers, and the Tutor of the Heir to the crown, were to be named by the Assembly, whose decrees were to have the force of law, even without the royal sanction. The Assembly passed all these resolutions without any discussion, but the people were raging out of doors, because the King had not been deposed, and Vergniaud, had great trouble in allaying a storm of petitioners. Under these circumstances it was impossible to refuse the demands of the Jacobins, that the Convention should be elected by universal suffrage, which was now granted as the solemn declaration of the equality of all adult males. But that this equalization of all men might not prove dangerous to the Revolution, and might only be employed in support of the new powers, was provided for by three decrees, which followed close upon the vote for the extension of the suffrage. Firstly, the dismissal of all the paid magistrates *(Juges de paix)* was simultaneously ordained by the National Assembly and the Hôtel de Ville—so troublesome had they hitherto been to the agitators. Secondly, the Municipalities were empowered to search for arms in the houses of suspected persons; "For," said Thuriot, "we are at war with a great portion of the citizens, and must conquer at all costs." While they thus disarmed their opponents, they strengthened their friends by ordering the formation of a fortified camp under the walls of the capital—a simple method of keeping all the faithful *Fédérés* in the neighbourhood. Lastly, the two factions shared the Ministry between them. The Gironde caused the reappointment of Roland, Servan and Clavière, to be carried by acclamation; and of the three others, Danton was chosen Minister of justice; Mongé, the zealous Jacobin Mathematician, Minister of the Marine, and the Liege journalist Lebrun, an *employé* of Dumouriez, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

END OF VOL. I.

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